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ENGLISH VERSE

VOLUME IV

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VOLUME IV

SIR WALTER SCOTT

TO

ELIZABETH BARRETT

BROWNING



Geoffrey Cumberlege

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

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SIR WALTER SCOTT

1771-1832

FROM 'THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL'

(1) THE MINSTREL

THE way was long, the wind was cold,
The Minstrel was infirm and old;
His withered cheek, and tresses grey,
Seemed to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the Bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, welladay! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppressed,
Wished to be with them, and at rest.
No more on prancing palfrey borne,
He carolled, light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caressed,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He poured to lord and lady gay
The unpremeditated lay:
Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger filled the Stuarts' throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had called his harmless art a crime.
A wandering Harper, scorned and poor,
He begged his bread from door to door,
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.

He passed where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower:
The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye—
No humbler resting-place was nigh;
With hesitating step at last
The embattled portal arch he passed,
Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft rolled back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door
Against the desolate and poor.
The Duchess marked his weary pace,
His timid mien, and reverend face,
And bade her page the menials tell
That they should tend the old man well:
For she had known adversity,
Though born in such a high degree;
In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb!

When kindness had his wants supplied,
And the old man was gratified,
Began to rise his minstrel pride:
And he began to talk anon
Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
And of Earl Walter, rest him, God!
A braver ne'er to battle rode;
And how full many a tale he knew
Of the old warriors of Buccleuch:
And, would the noble Duchess deign
To listen to an old man's strain,
Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,
That, if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtained;
The aged Minstrel audience gained.
But, when he reached the room of state,
Where she with all her ladies sate,
Perchance he wished his boon denied:
For, when to tune his harp he tried,
His trembling hand had lost the ease,
Which marks security to please;
And scenes long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain!
The pitying Duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.
And then, he said, he would full fain
He could recall an ancient strain
He never thought to sing again.
It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dames and mighty earls;
He had played it to King Charles the Good,
When he kept court in Holyrood;
And much he wished, yet feared, to try
The long-forgotten melody.
Amid the strings his fingers strayed,
And an uncertain warbling made,
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face and smiled;
And lightened up his faded eye
With all a poet's ecstasy.
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along:
The present scene, the future lot,

His toils, his wants, were all forgot;
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
In the full tide of song were lost;
Each blank, in faithless memory void,
The poet's glowing thought supplied;
And, while his harp responsive rung,
'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

(2) MELROSE ABBEY

IF thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St. David's ruined pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

(3) LOVE

I

AND said I that my limbs were old,
And said I that my blood was cold,
And that my kindly fire was fled,

And my poor withered heart was dead,
And that I might not sing of love?—
How could I to the dearest theme,
That ever warmed a minstrel's dream,
So foul, so false a recreant prove!
How could I name love's very name,
Nor wake my heart to notes of flame!

II

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green,
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

(4) NATURE'S SYMPATHY WITH THE POET

I

CALL it not vain; they do not err,
Who say, that when the Poet dies,
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies:
Who say, tall cliff and cavern lone
For the departed Bard make moan;
That mountains weep in crystal rill;
That flowers in tears of balm distil;
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,
And oaks, in deeper groan, reply;
And rivers teach their rushing wave
To murmur dirges round his grave.

II

Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn
Those things inanimate can mourn;
But that the stream, the wood, the gale,
Is vocal with the plaintive wail
Of those, who, else forgotten long,
Lived in the poet's faithful song,
And, with the poet's parting breath,
Whose memory feels a second death.
The Maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,
That love, true love, should be forgot,
From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear
Upon the gentle Minstrel's bier:
The phantom Knight, his glory fled,
Mourns o'er the field he heaped with dead;
Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,
And shrieks along the battle-plain.
The Chief, whose antique crownlet long
Still sparkled in the feudal song,
Now, from the mountain's misty throne,
Sees, in the thanedom once his own,
His ashes undistinguished lie,
His place, his power, his memory die:
His groans the lonely caverns fill,
His tears of rage impel the rill:
All mourn the Minstrel's harp unstrung,
Their name unknown, their praise unsung.

(5) TRUE LOVE

TRUE love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven:

It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly;

It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.

(6) PATRIOTISM

I

BREATHES there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.

II

O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,

That knits me to thy rugged strand !
 Still as I view each well-known scene,
 Think what is now, and what hath been,
 Seems as, to me, of all bereft,
 Sole friends thy woods and streams were left ;
 And thus I love them better still,
 Even in extremity of ill.
 By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
 Though none should guide my feeble way ;
 Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
 Although it chill my withered cheek ;
 Still lay my head by Teviot Stone,
 Though there, forgotten and alone,
 The Bard may draw his parting groan.

(7) THE DIRGE OF LOVELY ROSABELLE

O LISTEN, listen, ladies gay !

No haughty feat of arms I tell ;
 Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
 That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

'Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew !
 And, gentle ladye, deign to stay !
 Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
 Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

'The blackening wave is edged with white :
 To inch and rock the sea-mews fly ;
 The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
 Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

'Last night the gifted Seer did view
 A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay ;
 Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch :
 Why cross the gloomy firth to-day ?'

inch] isle.

‘Tis not because Lord Lindesay’s heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

‘Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If ’tis not filled by Rosabelle.’

O’er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
’Twas broader than the watch-fire’s light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin’s castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
’Twas seen from Dryden’s groves of oak,
And seen from caverned Hawthornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin’s chiefs uncoffined lie,
Each Baron for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seemed all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar’s pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmered all the dead men’s mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin’s barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;

Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung,
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

(8) THE MINSTREL'S LOWLY BOWER

HUSHED is the harp: the Minstrel gone.
And did he wander forth alone?
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No; close beneath proud Newark's tower,
Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower;
A simple hut; but there was seen
The little garden hedged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.
There sheltered wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begged before.
So passed the winter's day; but still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bow hill
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath;
When throstles sung in Hareheadshaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourished broad Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;

And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer;
And Yarrow, as he rolled along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.

FROM 'MARMION'

(1) IN MEMORIAM: NELSON, PITT, FOX.

To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings;
The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.
But oh! my country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise;
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand that grasped the victor steel?
The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine
Where glory weeps o'er NELSON's shrine;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallowed tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,
O never let those names depart!
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave.
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given.
Where'er his country's foes were found,
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Rolled, blazed, destroyed,—and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perished worth
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launched that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar;
Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave!
His worth who, in his mightiest hour,
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strained at subjection's bursting rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest gained,
The pride, he would not crush, restrained,
Showed their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the free-
man's laws.

Had'st thou but lived, though stripped of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propped the tottering throne:
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill!

Oh think, how to his latest day,
When Death, just hovering, claimed his prey,

With Palinure's unaltered mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood ;
Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way.
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallowed day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray ;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
He, who preserved them, PITT, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his rival slumbers nigh ;
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employed, and wanted most ;
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound ;
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine ;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
They sleep with him who sleeps below :
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppressed,
And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings ;

Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke agen,
'All peace on earth, good-will to men;'
If ever from an English heart,
O, *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record, that Fox a Briton died!
When Europe crouched to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave,
Was bartered by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurned,
The sullied olive-branch returned,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nailed her colours to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honoured grave,
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endowed,
How high they soared above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Looked up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of PITT and Fox alone.
Spells of such force no wizard grave

E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
These spells are spent, and, spent with these,
The wine of life is on the lees;
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tombed beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!—
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry,
'Here let their discord with them die.
Speak not for those a separate doom,
Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb;
But search the land of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like agen?'

Rest, ardent Spirits! till the cries
Of dying Nature bid you rise;
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
The leaden silence of your hearse;
Then, O, how impotent and vain
This grateful tributary strain!
Though not unmarked, from northern clime,
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme:
His Gothic harp has o'er you rung;
The Bard you deigned to praise, your deathless
names has sung.

(2) SONG

WHERE SHALL THE LOVER REST

WHERE shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever?
Where, through groves deep and high,
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

Chorus

Eleu loro, &c. Soft shall be his pillow.
There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving;
There, thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never!

Chorus

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never!
Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win the maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

Chorus

Eleu loro, &c. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.
Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it,
Never, O never!

Chorus

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never!

(3) LOCHINVAR

O, YOUNG Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the
best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had
none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.
He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for
stone.
He swam the Eske river where ford there was
none;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.
So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers,
and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his
sword,

(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)

'O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?

'I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;—
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar.'

The bride kissed the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,

With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
'Now tread we a measure!' said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume.
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered "'Twere better
by far,
To have matched our fair cousin with young
Lochinvar.'

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger
stood near;

So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!

'She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and
scaur;

They'll have fleet steeds that follow,' quoth young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting'mong Græmes of the Netherby
clan;

Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and
they ran:

There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochin-
var?—

(4) FLODDEN: THE LAST STAND

THE war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,

And—STANLEY! was the cry;

A light on Marmion's visage spread,

And fired his glazing eye:

With dying hand, above his head,

He shook the fragment of his blade,

And shouted 'Victory!

Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!'

Were the last words of Marmion.

By this though deep the evening fell,

Still rose the battle's deadly swell,

For still the Scots, around their King,

Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.

Where's now their victor vaward wing,

Where Huntly, and where Home?—

O, for a blast of that dread horn,

On Fontarabian echoes borne,

That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!
Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride!

* * * * *

But as they left the darkening heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hailed,
In headlong charge their horse assailed;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.

Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shattered bands;

And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.

Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.

Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless splash,

While many a broken band,
Disordered, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to town and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.

Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong:
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

Day dawns upon the mountain's side:
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one:
The sad survivors all are gone.

View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border castle high,
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
Nor cherish hope in vain,

That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land

May yet return again.

He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,

And fell on Flodden plain:

And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clenched within his manly hand,
Beseeemed the monarch slain.

FROM 'THE LADY OF THE LAKE'

(1) FLOWERS AND TREES

BOON nature scattered, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale, and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Grouped their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,

The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

(2) SONG

'Not faster yonder rowers' might
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;
Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

'High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battled line,
Good hawk and hound for silvan sport,
Where beauty sees the brave resort,
The honoured meed be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
And lost in love and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle.

'But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
Pine for his Highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
Remember then thy hap ere while,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

'Or if on life's uncertain main
 Mishap shall mar thy sail;
 If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
 Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
 Beneath the fickle gale;
 Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
 On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
 But come where kindred worth shall smile
 To greet thee in the lonely isle.'

(3) BOAT SONG

'HAIL to the chief who in triumph advances!
 Honoured and blessed be the evergreen Pine!
 Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
 Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
 Heaven send it happy dew,
 Earth lend it sap anew,
 Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
 While every Highland glen
 Sends our shout back agen,
 Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!

'Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
 Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
 When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the
 mountain,
 The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
 Moored in the rifted rock,
 Proof to the tempest's shock,
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
 Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
 Echo his praise agen,
 Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!

Beltane] a festival held early in May.

'Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied;
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her
side.

Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear agen,
Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!

'Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars, for the evergreen Pine!
O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepest glen,
Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

(4) DAWN ON LAKE KATRINE

THE summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the Lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain-shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.

The water-lily to the light
Her chalice reared of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The grey mist left the mountain side,
The torrent showed its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer cooed the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

(5) CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,

Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

(6) SONG

'THE heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
Far, far from love and thee, Mary;
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
And all it promised me, Mary.
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary.

A time will come with feeling fraught,
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if returned from conquered foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary!'

(7) BALLAD

ALICE BRAND

MERRY it is in the good greenwood .

When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

'O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you ;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

'O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight
Thy brother bold I slew.

'Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

'And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
To keep the cold away.'

'O Richard! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance ;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

'If pall and vair no more I swear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey,
As gay the forest-green.

mavis] the song-thrush.

merle] the blackbird.

'And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand.'

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woned within the hill;
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

'Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?

'Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man:
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

'Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.'

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
'I fear not sign,' quoth the grisly elf,
'That is made with bloody hands.'

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman, void of fear,—
'And if there's blood upon his hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer.'

'Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand.'

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
'And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

'And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?'

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

'And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

'And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

'It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatched away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

'But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine.'

She crossed him once, she crossed him twice,
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
When all the bells were ringing.

(8) RODERICK DHU AND FITZ-JAMES

A NOBLE ACTION

'HAVE, then, thy wish!' He whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.

Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.
That whistle garrisoned the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood, and still.
Like the loose crags, whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The Mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Bentedi's living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—'How sayest thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!'
Fitz-James was brave: Though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He manned himself with dauntless air,
Returned the Chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before:

'Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.'
Sir Roderick marked, and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood, then waved his hand:
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;
It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth
The wind's last breath had tossed in air
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair;
The next but swept a lone hill-side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide:
The sun's last glance was glinted back,
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack;
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green and cold grey stone.

(9) HARP OF THE NORTH, FAREWELL!

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow
dark,

On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,

With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing
bee.

Yet once again farewell, thou Minstrel harp!

Yet once again forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp

May idly cavil at an idle lay.

Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,

Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devoured alone.

That I o'erlived such woes, Enchantress! is thine
own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!

'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,

'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.

Receding now, the dying numbers ring

Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring

A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
And now, 'tis silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee
well!

FROM 'ROKEBY'

(1) SONG

BRIGNALL BANKS

O, BRIGNALL banks are wild and fair,

And Greta woods are green,

And you may gather garlands there

Would grace a summer queen.

And as I rode by Dalton-hall,

Beneath the turrets high,

A maiden on the castle wall
Was singing merrily,—
‘O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I’d rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.’

‘If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
As blithe as Queen of May.’

Yet sung she, ‘Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I’d rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.

I read you, by your bugle-horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn,
To keep the king’s greenwood.’

‘A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And ’tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night.’

Yet sung she, ‘Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May!

With burnished brand and musketoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon,

That lists the tuck of drum.'
 'I list no more the tuck of drum,
 No more the trumpet hear;
 But when the beetle sounds his hum,
 My comrades take the spear.
 And O! though Brignall banks be fair,
 And Greta woods be gay,
 Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
 Would reign my Queen of May!

Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
 A nameless death I'll die;
 The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead,
 Were better mate than I!
 And when I'm with my comrades met
 Beneath the greenwood bough,
 What once we were we all forget,
 Nor think what we are now.
 Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there
 Would grace a summer queen.'

(2) SONG

'A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
 A weary lot is thine!
 To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
 And press the rue for wine!
 A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
 A feather of the blue,
 A doublet of the Lincoln green,—
 No more of me you knew,
My love!
 No more of me you knew.

This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow,
Ere we two meet again.'
He turned his charger as he spake,
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
Said, 'Adieu for evermore,
My love!
And adieu for evermore.'

(3) SONG

THE HARP

I WAS a wild and wayward boy,
My childhood scorned each childish toy;
Retired from all, reserved and coy,
To musing prone,
I wooed my solitary joy,
My Harp alone.

My youth, with bold Ambition's mood,
Despised the humble stream and wood
Where my poor father's cottage stood,
To fame unknown;
What should my soaring views make good?
My Harp alone!

Love came with all his frantic fire,
And wild romance of vain desire:
The baron's daughter heard my lyre,
And praised the tone;—
What could presumptuous hope inspire?
My Harp alone!

At manhood's touch the bubble burst,
 And manhood's pride the vision curst,
 And all that had my folly nursed
 Love's sway to own;
 Yet spared the spell that lulled me first,
 My Harp alone!

Woe came with war, and want with woe;
 And it was mine to undergo
 Each outrage of the rebel foe:
 Can aught atone
 My fields laid waste, my cot laid low?
 My Harp alone!

Ambition's dreams I've seen depart,
 Have rued of penury the smart,
 Have felt of love the venom'd dart
 When hope was flown;
 Yet rests one solace to my heart,—
 My Harp alone!

Then over mountain, moor, and hill,
 My faithful Harp, I'll bear thee still;
 And when this life of want and ill
 Is well-nigh gone,
 Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill,
 My Harp alone!

(4) SONG

THE CAVALIER

WHILE the dawn on the mountain was misty and
 grey,
 My true love has mounted his steed and away,
 Over hill, over valley, o'er dale, and o'er down;
 Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the
 Crown!

He has doffed the silk doublet the breastplate to
bear,
He has placed the steel-cap o'er his long flowing
hair,
From his belt to his stirrup his broadsword hangs
down,—
Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the
Crown!

For the rights of fair England that broadsword he
draws,
Her King is his leader, her church is his cause;
His watchword is honour, his pay is renown,—
God strike with the Gallant that strikes for the
Crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
The roundheaded rebels of Westminster Hall;
But tell these bold traitors of London's proud town
That the spears of the North have encircled the
Crown!

There's Derby and Cavendish, dread of their foes;
There's Erin's high Ormond, and Scotland's
Montrose!

Would you match the base Skippon, and Massey,
and Brown,
With the Barons of England that fight for the
Crown?

Now joy to the crest of the brave Cavalier!
Be his banner unconquered, resistless his spear,
Till in peace and in triumph his toils he may drown
In a pledge to fair England, her Church, and her
Crown!

FROM 'THE LORD OF THE ISLES'

(1) FADING AUTUMN

AUTUMN departs; but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville;
Beneath a shroud of russet dropped with gold
Tweed and his tributaries mingle still;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper sounds the rill,
Yet lingering notes of silvan music swell,
The deep-toned cushat, and the redbreast shrill;
And yet some tints of summer splendour tell
When the broad sun sinks down on Ettrick's
western fell.

Autumn departs; from Gala's fields no more
Come rural sounds our kindred banks to cheer;
Blent with the stream, and gale that wafts it
o'er,
No more the distant reaper's mirth we hear.
The last blithe shout hath died upon our ear,
And harvest home hath hushed the clanging
wain;
On the waste hill no forms of life appear,
Save where, sad laggard of the autumnal train,
Some age-struck wanderer gleans few ears of
scattered grain.

Deem'st thou these saddened scenes have pleasure
still?

Lovest thou through Autumn's fading realms to
stray,

To see the heath-flower withered on the hill,
To listen to the wood's expiring lay,

cushat] the ring-dove or wood-pigeon.

To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,
To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
And moralize on mortal joy and pain?
O! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn not the minstrel
strain.

No! do not scorn, although its hoarser note
Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
Though faint its beauties as the tints remote
That gleam through mist in autumn's evening
sky,
And few as leaves that tremble, sear and dry,
When wild November hath his bugle wound;
Nor mock my toil—a lonely gleaner I,
Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest
bound,
Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest
found.

(2) A TEMPEST

HAST thou not marked, when o'er thy startled
head
Sudden and deep the thunder-peal has rolled,
How, when its echoes fell, a silence dead
Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold?
The rye-grass shakes not on the sod-built fold,
The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
The wall-flower waves not on the ruined hold,
Till, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the
groaning hill.

(3) LAKE CORISKIN

AWHILE their route they silent made,
As men who stalk for mountain-deer,
Till the good Bruce to Ronald said,
‘Saint Mary! what a scene is here!
I’ve traversed many a mountain-strand,
Abroad and in my native land,
And it has been my lot to tread
Where safety more than pleasure led;
Thus, many a waste I’ve wandered o’er,
Clombe many a crag, crossed many a moor,
But, by my halidome,
A scene so rude, so wild as this,
Yet so sublime in barrenness,
Ne’er did my wandering footsteps press,
Where’er I happed to roam.’

No marvel thus the Monarch spake;
For rarely human eye has known
A scene so stern as that dread lake,
With its dark ledge of barren stone.
Seems that primeval earthquake’s sway
Hath rent a strange and shattered way
Through the rude bosom of the hill,
And that each naked precipice,
Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
Tells of the outrage still.
The wildest glen, but this, can show
Some touch of Nature’s genial glow;
On high Benmore green mosses grow,
And heath-bells bud in deep Glencroe,
And copse on Cruchan-Ben;
But here,—above, around, below,
On mountain or in glen,

Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
Nor aught of vegetative power,
 The weary eye may ken.
For all is rocks at random thrown,
Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
 As if were here denied
The summer sun, the spring's sweet dew,
That clothe with many a varied hue
 The bleakest mountain-side.

And wilder, forward as they wound,
Were the proud cliffs and lake profound.
Huge terraces of granite black
Afforded rude and cumbered track;
 For from the mountain hoar,
Hurled headlong in some night of fear,
When yelled the wolf and fled the deer,
 Loose crags had toppled o'er;
And some, chance-poised and balanced, lay,
So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,
In Nature's rage at random thrown,
Yet trembling like the Druid's stone
 On its precarious base.
The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
And round the skirts their mantle furled,
Or on the sable waters curled,
Or on the eddy breezes whirled,
 Dispersed in middle air.
And oft, condensed, at once they lower,
When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
 Pours like a torrent down

And when return the sun's glad beams,
Whitened with foam a thousand streams
Leap from the mountain's crown.

'This lake,' said Bruce, 'whose barriers drear
Are precipices sharp and sheer,
Yielding no track for goat or deer,
Save the black shelves we tread,
How term you its dark waves? and how
Yon northern mountain's pathless brow,
And yonder peak of dread,
That to the evening sun uplifts
The griesly gulfs and slaty rifts
Which seam its shivered head?'
'Coriskin call the dark lake's name,
Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
From old Cuchullin, chief of fame.
But bards, familiar in our isles
Rather with Nature's frowns than smiles,
Full oft their careless humours please
By sportive names from scenes like these.
I would old Torquil were to show
His maidens with their breasts of snow,
Or that my noble Liege were nigh
To hear his Nurse sing lullaby!
(The Maids—tall cliffs with breakers white,
The Nurse—a torrent's roaring might,)
Or that your eye could see the mood
Of Corryvreckin's whirlpool rude,
When dons the Hag her whitened hood!
'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
For scenes so stern, fantastic names.'

(4) SAVAGE GRANDEUR

STRANGER! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced
The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath
 placed,
By lake and cataract, her lonely throne;
Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown
Mingle their echoes with the eagles' cry,
And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning
 sky.

Yes! 'twas sublime, but sad. The loneliness
Loaded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye;
And strange and awful fears began to press
Thy bosom with a stern solemnity.
Then hast thou wished some woodman's cottage
 nigh,
Something that showed of life, though low and
 mean;
Glad sight, its curling wreath of smoke to spy,
Glad sound, its cock's blithe carol would have
 been,
Or children whooping wild beneath the willows
 green.

Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur
 wakes
An awful thrill that softens into sighs;
Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch's
 lakes,
In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise:
Or farther, where, beneath the northern skies,

Chides wild Loch-Eribol his caverns hoar—
But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
Of desert dignity to that dread shore
That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears Coriskin roar.

THE EVE OF ST. JOHN

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
He spurred his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
His banner broad to rear;
He went not 'gainst the English yew
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced, and his helmet was
laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;
At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel sperthe,
Full ten pound weight and more.

The Baron returned in three days' space,
And his looks were sad and sour;
And weary was his courser's pace,
As he reached his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor
Ran red with English blood;
Where the Douglas true and the bold Buccleuch
'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hacked and hewed,
His acton pierced and tore,

sperthe] axe. acton] leather jacket worn under coat
of mail.

His axe and his dagger with blood imbrued,--
But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him close and still;
And he whistled thrice for his little foot-page,
His name was English Will.

'Come thou hither, my little foot-page,
Come hither to my knee;
Though thou art young, and tender of age,
I think thou art true to me.

'Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true!
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
What did thy lady do?'

'My lady each night sought the lonely light
That burns on the wild Watchfold;
For, from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foeman told.

'The bittern clamoured from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
To the eiry Beacon Hill.

'I watched her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,
It burnèd all alone.

'The second night I kept her in sight
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might! an armed Knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

‘And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

‘The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain-blast was still,
As again I watched the secret pair
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.

‘And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve,
And say “Come this night to thy lady’s bower;
Ask no bold Baron’s leave.

“He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she’ll undo to her knight so true
On the eve of good Saint John.”

“I cannot come, I must not come,
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of Saint John I must wander alone,
In thy bower I may not be.”

“Now out on thee, fainthearted knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet
Is worth the whole summer’s day.

“And I’ll chain the blood-hound, and the warder
shall not sound,
And rushes shall be strewed on the stair;
So, by the black rood-stone, and by holy Saint
John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!”

“Though the blood-hound be mute, and the rush
beneath my foot,
And the warder his bugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the
east,
And my footstep he would know.

“O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east,
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en;
And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.”

‘He turned him around, and grimly he frowned,
Then he laughed right scornfully—
“He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that
knight
May as well say mass for me.

“At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits
have power,
In thy chamber will I be.”
With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
And no more did I see.’

‘Then changed, I trow, was that bold Baron’s brow,
From the dark to the blood-red high—
‘Now tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die!’

‘His arms shone full bright in the beacon’s red
light;
His plume it was scarlet and blue;
On his shield was a hound in a silver leash
bound,
And his crest was a branch of the yew.’”

‘Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold, and low laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon-tree.’

‘Yet hear but my word, my noble lord!
For I heard her name his name;
And that lady bright, she called the knight
Sir Richard of Coldinghame.’

The bold Baron’s brow then changed, I trow,
From high blood-red to pale—
‘The grave is deep and dark, and the corpse is
stiff and stark,
So I may not trust thy tale.

‘Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,
Full three nights ago, by some secret foe
That gay gallant was slain.

‘The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drowned the name;
For the Dryburgh bells ring and the white monks
do sing
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame!’

He passed the court-gate and he oped the tower-
grate,
And he mounted the narrow stair
To the bartizan-seat, where, with maids that on her
wait,
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood,
Looked over hill and vale,
Over Tweed’s fair flood and Mertoun’s wood
And all down Teviotdale.

‘Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!’

‘Now hail, thou Baron true!

What news, what news from Ancram fight?

What news from the bold Buccleuch?’

‘The Ancram Moor is red with gore,

For many a southron fell;

And Buccleuch has charged us evermore

To watch our beacons well.’

The lady blushed red, but nothing she said;

Nor added the Baron a word.

Then she stepped down the stair to her chamber
fair,

And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourned, and the Baron tossed
and turned,

And oft to himself he said,

‘The worms around him creep, and his bloody
grave is deep—

It cannot give up the dead!’

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,

The night was wellnigh done,

When a heavy sleep on that Baron fell,

On the eve of good Saint John.

The lady looked through the chamber fair,

By the light of a dying flame;

And she was aware of a knight stood there—

Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

‘Alas! away, away!’ she cried,

‘For the holy Virgin’s sake!’

‘Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side;

But, lady, he will not awake.

‘By Eildon-tree, for long nights three,
In bloody grave have I lain;
The mass and the death-prayer are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

‘By the Baron’s brand, near Tweed’s fair strand,
Most foully slain I fell;
And my restless sprite on the beacon’s height
For a space is doomed to dwell.

‘At our trysting-place, for a certain space,
I must wander to and fro;
But I had not had power to come to thy bower
Had’st thou not conjured me so.’

Love mastered fear; her brow she crossed—

‘How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved, or art thou lost?’
The vision shook his head!

‘Who spilleth life shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe:
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive.’

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam,
His right upon her hand—
The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score of fingers four
Remains on that board impressed;
And for evermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
Ne’er looks upon the sun;
There is a monk in Melrose tower,
He speaketh word to none;

That nun who ne'er beholds the day,
That monk who speaks to none—
That nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay,
That monk the bold Baron.

NORA'S VOW

HEAR what Highland Nora said,—
'The Earlie's son I will not wed,
Should all the race of nature die,
And none be left but he and I.
For all the gold, for all the gear,
And all the lands both far and near
That ever valour lost or won,
I would not wed the Earlie's son.'

'A maiden's vows,' old Callum spoke,
'Are lightly made and lightly broke;
The heather on the mountain's height
Begins to bloom in purple light;
The frost-wind soon shall sweep away
That lustre deep from glen and brae;
Yet Nora, ere its bloom be gone,
May blithely wed the Earlie's son.'

'The swan,' she said, 'the lake's clear breast
May barter for the eagle's nest;
The Awe's fierce stream may backward turn,
Ben-Cruaichan fall, and crush Kilchurn;
Our kilted clans, when blood is high,
Before their foes may turn and fly;
But I, were all these marvels done,
Would never wed the Earlie's son.'

Still in the water-lily's shade
Her wonted nest the wild-swan made;

Ben-Cruaichan stands as fast as ever,
Still downward foams the Awe's fierce river;
To shun the clash of foeman's steel
No Highland brogue has turned the heel;
But Nora's heart is lost and won,
—She's wedded to the Earlie's son!

HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting-spear!
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain grey,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming:
And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the greenwood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay,
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk:
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF

O HUSH thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers which
we see,

They all are belonging, dear babie, to thee.

O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,

O ho ro, i ri ri, &c.

O fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their blades would
be red,

Ere the step of a foeman drew near to thy bed.

O ho ro, i ri ri, &c.

O hush thee, my babie, the time soon will come
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and
drum;

Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you
may,

For strife comes with manhood, and waking with
day.

O ho ro, i ri ri, &c. .

SIR WALTER SCOTT
JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

‘WHY weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I’ll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen’—
But aye she loot the tears down fa’
For Jock of Hazeldean.

‘Now let this wilfu’ grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington,
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha’,
His sword in battle keen’—
But aye she loot the tears down fa’
For Jock of Hazeldean.

‘A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o’ them a’,
Shall ride our forest queen’—
But aye she loot the tears down fa’
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha’;
The ladie was not seen!
She’s o’er the border, and awa’
Wi’ Jock of Hazeldean.

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,

Pibroch of Donuil,

Wake thy wild voice anew,

Summon Clan-Conuil.

Come away, come away,

Hark to the summons!

Come in your war array,

Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and

From mountain so rocky,

The war-pipe and pennon

Are at Inverlochy.

Come every hill-plaid, and

True heart that wears one,

Come every steel blade, and

Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,

The flock without shelter;

Leave the corpse uninterred,

The bride at the altar;

Leave the deer, leave the steer,

Leave nets and barges:

Come with your fighting gear,

Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when

Forests are rended,

Come as the waves come, when

Navies are stranded:

Faster come, faster come,

Faster and faster,

Chief, vassal, page and groom,

Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward, each man, set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!

BONNY DUNDEE

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who
spoke,
'Ere the King's crown shall fall there are crowns
to be broke;
So let each Cavalier who loves honour and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

'Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the West Port, and let me gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!'

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward, the drums they are
beat;
But the Provost, douce man, said, 'Just e'en let
him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of Dundee.'

'Come fill up my cup,' &c.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the
Bow,
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her pow;

But the young plants of grace they looked couthie
and slee,

Thinking, 'Luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny
Dundee!'

'Come fill up my cup,' &c.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-Market was
crammed

As if half the West had set tryst to be hanged;

There was spite in each look, there was fear in
each e'e,

As they watched for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.

'Come fill up my cup,' &c.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears

And lang-hafted gullies to kill Cavaliers;

But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway
was free,

At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

'Come fill up my cup,' &c.

He spurred to the foot of the proud Castle rock,

And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke;

'Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak twa words
or three,

For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.'

'Come fill up my cup,' &c.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—

'Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose!

Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,

Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

'Come fill up my cup,' &c.

‘There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond
Forth,

If there’s lords in the Lowlands, there’s chiefs in
the North;

There are wild Duniewassals, three thousand times
three,

Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

‘Come fill up my cup,’ &c.

‘There’s brass on the target of barkened bull-hide;

There’s steel in the scabbard that dangles beside;

The brass shall be burnished, the steel shall flash
free,

At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

‘Come fill up my cup,’ &c.

‘Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks—

Ere I own an usurper, I’ll couch with the fox;

And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,

You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!’

‘Come fill up my cup,’ &c.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were
blown,

The kettle-drums clashed, and the horseman rode
on.

Till on Ravelston’s cliffs and on Clermiston’s lee,

Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

‘Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,

Come saddle the horses and call up the men,

Come open your gates, and let me gae free,

For it’s up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!’

SONGS FROM THE NOVELS

(1) HIE AWAY, HIE AWAY

HIE away, hie away,
Over bank and over brae,
Where the copsewood is the greenest,
Where the fountains glisten sheenest,
Where the lady-fern grows strongest,
Where the morning dew lies longest,
Where the black-cock sweetest sips it,
Where the fairy latest trips it:
Hie to haunts right seldom seen,
Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,
Over bank and over brae,
Hie away, hie away.

Waverley.

(2) PROUD MAISIE

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.
'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?'
'When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.'
'Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?'
'The grey-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.
'The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady.
The owl from the steeple sing,
"Welcome, proud lady."'

The Heart of Midlothian.

(3) LUCY ASHTON'S SONG

LOOK not thou on beauty's charming,
 Sit thou still when kings are arming,
 Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,
 Speak not when the people listens,
 Stop thine ear against the singer,
 From the red gold keep thy finger;
 Vacant heart and hand and eye,
 Easy live and quiet die.

The Bride of Lammermoor.

(4) SOUND, SOUND THE CLARION

SOUND, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
 To all the sensual world proclaim,
 One crowded hour of glorious life
 Is worth an age without a name.

Old Mortality.

(5) THE BAREFOOTED FRIAR

I'LL give thee, good fellow, a twelve-month or
 twain,
 To search Europe through from Byzantium to
 Spain;
 But ne'er shall you find, should you search till you
 tire,
 So happy a man as the Barefooted Friar.

Your knight for his lady pricks forth in career,
 And is brought home at even-song pricked through
 with a spear;
 I confess him in haste—for his lady desires
 No comfort on earth save the Barefooted Friar's.

Your monarch?—Pshaw! many a prince has been
known

To barter his robes for our cowl and our gown;

But which of us e'er felt the idle desire

To exchange for a crown the grey hood of a Friar?

The Friar has walked out, and where'er he has gone,

The land and its fatness is marked for his own;

He can roam where he lists, he can stop when he
tires,

For every man's house is the Barefooted Friar's.

He's expected at noon, and no wight, till he comes,

May profane the great chair, or the porridge of
plums;

For the best of the cheer, and the seat by the fire,

Is the undenied right of the Barefooted Friar.

He's expected at night, and the pasty's made hot,

They broach the brown ale, and they fill the black
pot;

And the goodwife would wish the goodman in the
mire,

Ere he lacked a soft pillow, the Barefooted Friar.

Long flourish the sandal, the cord, and the cope,

The dread of the devil and trust of the Pope!

For to gather life's roses, unscathed by the brier,

Is granted alone to the Barefooted Friar.

Ivanhoe.

(6) ON TWEED RIVER

MERRILY swim we, the moon shines bright,

Both current and ripple are dancing in light:

We have roused the night raven, I heard him
croak

As we plashed along beneath the oak

That flings its broad branches so far and so wide,
Their shadows are dancing in midst of the tide.
'Who wakens my nestlings?' the raven he said,
'My beak shall ere morn in his blood be red!
For a blue swollen corpse is a dainty meal,
And I'll have my share with the pike and the eel.'

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
There's a golden gleam on the distant height:
There's a silver shower on the alders dank,
And the drooping willows that wave on the bank.
I see the Abbey, both turret and tower,
It is all astir for the vesper hour;
The monks for the chapel are leaving each cell,
But where's Father Philip should toll the bell?

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
Downward we drift through shadow and light;
Under yon rock the eddies sleep,
Calm and silent, dark and deep.
The Kelpy has risen from the fathomless pool,
He has lighted his candle of death and of dool:
Look, Father, look, and you'll laugh to see
How he gapes and glares with his eyes on thee!

Good luck to your fishing, whom watch ye to-
night?

A man of mean or a man of might?
Is it layman or priest that must float in your cove,
Or lover who crosses to visit his love?
Hark! heard ye the Kelpy reply as we passed,—
'God's blessing on the warder, he locked the bridge
fast!

All that come to my cove are sunk,
Priest or layman, lover or monk.'

Landed—landed! the black book hath won,
Else had you seen Berwick with morning sun!
Sain ye, and save ye, and blithe mot ye be,
For seldom they land that go swimming with me.

The Monastery.

(7) BORDER BALLAD

MARCH, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why the deil dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
Many a banner spread,
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story.
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and the old Scottish
glory.

Come from the hills where your hirsels are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding,
War-steeds are bounding,
Stand to your arms then, and march in good
order;
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray,
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border.

The Monastery.

(8) COUNTY GUY

AH! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
 The sun has left the lea,
 The orange flower perfumes the bower,
 The breeze is on the sea.
 The lark, his lay who trilled all day,
 Sits hushed his partner nigh;
 Breeze, bird, and flower, confess the hour,
 But where is County Guy?
 The village maid steals through the shade,
 Her shepherd's suit to hear;
 To beauty shy, by lattice high,
 Sings high-born Cavalier.
 The star of Love, all stars above,
 Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
 And high and low the influence know—
 But where is County Guy?

Quentin Durward.

ANONYMOUS

THE VICAR OF BRAY

IN good King Charles's golden days,
 When loyalty no harm meant,
 A zealous High-Churchman was I,
 And so I got preferment.
 To teach my flock I never missed,
 Kings were by God appointed,
 And lost are those that dare resist,
 Or touch the Lord's anointed.
Chorus. And this is law I will maintain,
 Until my dying day, Sir,
 That whatsoever King shall reign,
 I'll still be the Vicar of Bray, Sir.

When royal James possessed the crown,
And Popery came in fashion,
The penal laws I hooted down,
And read the Declaration;
The Church of Rome I found would fit
Full well my constitution;
And I had been a Jesuit,
But for the Revolution.

Chorus. And this is law, &c.

When William was our King declared,
To ease the nation's grievance,
With this new wind about I steered,
And swore to him allegiance.
Old principles I did revoke,
Set conscience at a distance;
Passive obedience was a joke,
A jest was non-resistance.

Chorus. And this is law, &c.

When royal Anne became our Queen,
The Church of England's glory,
Another face of things was seen,
And I became a Tory;
Occasional conformists base,
I blamed their moderation;
And thought the Church in danger was,
By such prevarication.

Chorus. And this is law, &c.

When George in pudding-time came o'er,
And moderate men looked big, Sir,
My principles I changed once more,
And so became a Whig, Sir;

And thus preferment I procured
 From our new faith's-defender;
 And almost every day abjured
 The Pope and the Pretender.

Chorus. And this is law, &c.

THE KEEL ROW

As I came thro' Sandgate,
 Thro' Sandgate, thro' Sandgate,
 As I came thro' Sandgate
 I heard a lassie sing:
 'O weel may the keel row,
 The keel row, the keel row,
 O weel may the keel row,
 That my laddie's in.'

O wha's like my Johnny,
 Sae leish, sae blythe, sae bonny?
 He's foremost among the mony
 Keel lads o' coaly Tyne:
 He'll set and row so tightly,
 Or in the dance—so sprightly—
 He'll cut and shuffle sightly;
 'Tis true,—were he not mine.

He wears a blue bonnet,
 Blue bonnet, blue bonnet;
 He wears a blue bonnet,—
 And a dimple in his chin:
 And weel may the keel row,
 The keel row, the keel row;
 And weel may the keel row,
 That my laddie's in.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1772-1834

LEWTI, OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT

At midnight by the stream I roved,
 To forget the form I loved.
 Image of Lewti! from my mind
 Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The moon was high, the moonlight gleam
 And the shadow of a star
 Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
 But the rock shone brighter far,
 The rock half sheltered from my view
 By pendent boughs of tressy yew—
 So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
 Gleaming through her sable hair.
 Image of Lewti! from my mind
 Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,
 Onward to the moon it passed;
 Still brighter and more bright it grew,
 With floating colours not a few,
 Till it reached the moon at last:
 Then the cloud was wholly bright,
 With a rich and amber light!
 And so with many a hope I seek
 And with such joy I find my Lewti;
 And even so my pale wan cheek
 Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty!
 Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind,
 If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
Away it goes ; away so soon ?
Alas ! it has no power to stay :
Its hues are dim, its hues are grey—
Away it passes from the moon !
How mournfully it seems to fly,
Ever fading more and more,
To joyless regions of the sky—
And now 'tis whiter than before !
As white as my poor cheek will be,
When Lewti ! on my couch I lie,
A dying man for love of thee.
Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapour in the sky,
Thin, and white, and very high ;
I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud :
Perhaps the breezes that can fly
Now below and now above,
Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
Of Lady fair—that died for love.
For maids, as well as youths, have perished
From fruitless love too fondly cherished.
Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush ! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks for ever :
Like echoes to a distant thunder,
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread,
And startle from their reedy bed.
O beauteous birds ! methinks ye measure

Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies,
When silent night has closed her eyes:

It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head:

Voice of the Night! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread,
And creep, like thee, with soundless tread.
I then might view her bosom white
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently-swelling wave.

Oh! that she saw me in a dream
And dreamt that I had died for care;
All pale and wasted I would seem,
Yet fair withal, as spirits are!
I'd die indeed, if I might see
Her bosom heave, and heave for me!
Soothe, gentle image! soothe my mind!
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

KUBLA KHAN

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:

And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething

As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.

It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,

And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

FROM 'FEARS IN SOLITUDE'

Written in April, 1798, during the alarm of an Invasion.

(1) THE DELL

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell! O'er stiller place
No singing sky-lark ever poised himself.
The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely: but the dell,
Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal cornfield, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at eve,
The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
O! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook!
Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly he,
The humble man, who, in his youthful years,

Knew just so much of folly, as had made
His early manhood more securely wise!
Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,
While from the singing-lark (that sings unseen
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best),
And from the sun, and from the breezy air
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame;
And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religious meanings in the forms of nature!
And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
And dreaming hears thee still, O singing-lark;
That singest like an angel in the clouds!

(2) ENGLAND

O native Britain! O my Mother Isle!
How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear and
holy
To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,
Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in nature,
All lovely and all honourable things,
Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being?
There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
Unborrowed from my country. O divine
And beauteous island! thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me!

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

IN SEVEN PARTS

PART THE FIRST

It is an ancient Mariner,
 And he stoppeth one of three.
 'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

An ancient
 Mariner
 meeteth
 three Gal-
 lants bid-
 den to a
 wedding-
 feast, and
 detaineth
 one.

'The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
 And I am next of kin;
 The guests are met, the feast is set:
 May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 'There was a ship,' quoth he.
 'Hold off! unhand me, greybeard loon!'
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
 And listens like a three years' child:
 The Mariner hath his will.

The Wed-
 ding-Guest
 is spell-
 bound by
 the eye of
 the old sea-
 faring man,
 and con-
 strained to
 hear his
 tale.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
 He cannot choose but hear;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner:

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the lighthouse top.

The Mari- The sun came up upon the left,
ner tells Out of the sea came he!
how the And he shone bright, and on the right
ship sailed Southward Went down into the sea.
southward with a good
wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—

The Wed- The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
ding-Guest For he heard the loud bassoon.

heareth the The bride hath paced into the hall,
bridal Red as a rose is she;
music; but Nodding their heads before her goes
the Mari- The merry minstrelsy.
ner con-
tinueth his
tale.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship 'And now the Storm-blast came, and he
drawn by Was tyrannous and strong:
a storm to- He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
ward the South Pole. And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
 Did send a dismal sheen:
 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
 The ice was all between.

The land of
 ice, and of
 fearful
 sounds,
 where no
 living thing
 was to be
 seen.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
 The ice was all around:
 It cracked and growled, and roared and
 howled,
 Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross:
 Thorough the fog it came;
 As if it had been a Christian soul,
 We hailed it in God's name.

Till a great
 sea-bird,
 called the
 Albatross,
 came
 through
 the snow-
 fog, and
 was re-
 ceived
 with great
 joy and
 hospitality.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
 And round and round it flew.
 The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
 The helmsman steered us through!

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
 The Albatross did follow,
 And every day, for food or play,
 Came to the mariners' hollo!

And lo! the
 Albatross
 proveth a
 bird of
 good omen,
 and fol-
 loweth the
 ship as it
 returned
 northward
 through fog
 and float-
 ing ice.

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
 It perched for vespers nine;
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke
 white,
 Glimmered the white moonshine.'

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
 From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
 Why look'st thou so?'—'With my cross-
 bow
 I shot the Albatross.'

The ancient
 Mariner in-
 hospitably
 killeth the
 pious bird
 of good
 omen.

PART THE SECOND

'The Sun now rose upon the right:
 Out of the sea came he,
 Still hid in mist, and on the left
 Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
 But no sweet bird did follow,
 Nor any day for food or play
 Came to the mariners' hollo!

His ship- And I had done an hellish thing,
 mates cry And it would work 'em woe:
 out against For all averred, I had killed the bird
 the ancient Mariner, That made the breeze to blow.
 for killing Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
 the bird of That made the breeze to blow!
 good luck.

But when Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
 the fog The glorious Sun uprist:
 cleared off, Then all averred, I had killed the bird
 they justify That brought the fog and mist.
 the same, 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
 and thus That bring the fog and mist.
 make themselves accomplices in the crime.

The fair The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
 breeze continues; the The furrow followed free;
 ship enters We were the first that ever burst
 the Pacific Into that silent sea.
 Ocean and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

The ship Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt
 hath been down,
 suddenly 'Twas sad as sad could be;
 becalmed. And we did speak only to break
 The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
 The bloody Sun, at noon,
 Right up above the mast did stand,
 No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
 We stuck, nor breath nor motion:
 As idle as a painted ship
 Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,
 And all the boards did shrink;
 Water, water, everywhere,
 Nor any drop to drink.

And the
 Albatross
 begins to
 be avenged.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
 That ever this should be!
 Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
 Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
 The death-fires danced at night;
 The water, like a witch's oils,
 Burnt green, and blue and white.

And some in dreams assured were
 Of the spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

A spirit had
 followed
 them; one
 of the invi-
 sible inha-
 bitants of

this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
 Was withered at the root;
 We could not speak, no more than if
 We had been choked with soot.

The ship-
mates, in
their sore
distress,
would fain
throw the
whole guilt
on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the
dead sea-bird round his neck.

Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART THE THIRD

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth a
sign in the
element
afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its
nearer ap-
proach, it
seemeth
him to be
a ship; and
at a dear
ransom he
freeth his
speech
from the
bonds of
thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, "A sail! a sail!"

With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
Agape they heard me call:

Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

A flash of
joy.

See! See! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

And horror
follows. For
can it be a
ship that
comes on-
ward with-
out wind or
tide?

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was wellnigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

It seemeth
him but the
skeleton of
a ship.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

And its ribs
are seen as
bars on the
face of the
setting Sun.
The spectre-
woman and
her death-
mate and no
other on
board the
skeleton-
ship.
Like vessel,
like crew!

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-in-Death have dined for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
"The game is done! I've won, I've won!"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight within the courts of the sun.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed
white;

At the rising of the Moon,

From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

one after another,

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

his ship-mates drop down dead;

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

but Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART THE FOURTH

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
 I fear thy skinny hand!
 And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
 As is the ribbed sea-sand.

The Wed-
 ding-Guest
 feareth
 that a
 spirit is
 talking to
 him;

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
 And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—

'Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
 This body dropt not down.

But the
 ancient
 Mariner as-
 sureth him
 of his bodi-
 ly life, and
 proceedeth
 to relate
 his horrible
 penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
 Alone on a wide wide sea!
 And never a saint took pity on
 My soul in agony.

He despis-
 eth the
 creatures of
 the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
 And they all dead did lie:
 And a thousand thousand slimy things
 Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
 And drew my eyes away;
 I looked upon the rotting deck,
 And there the dead men lay.

And envi-
 eth that
 they should
 live, and so
 many lie
 dead.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
 But or ever a prayer had gusht,
 A wicked whisper came, and made
 My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
 And the balls like pulses beat;
 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and
 the sky

Lay like a load on my weary eye,
 And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth
for him in
the eye of
the dead
men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they;
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and
fixedness
he yearneth
towards the
journeying

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—
Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward;
and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their
appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural
homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly
expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light of the
Moon he
beholdeth
God's
creatures of
the great
calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:

Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
 They coiled and swam; and every track
 Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue
 Their beauty might declare:
 A spring of love gushed from my heart,
 And I blessed them unaware:
 Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
 And I blessed them unaware.

Their
 beauty and
 their hap-
 piness.
 He blesseth
 them in his
 heart.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
 And from my neck so free
 The Albatross fell off, and sank
 Like lead into the sea.

The spell
 begins to
 break.

PART THE FIFTH

'Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
 Beloved from pole to pole!
 To Mary Queen the praise be given!
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
 That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
 That had so long remained,
 I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
 And when I awoke, it rained.

By grace of
 the holy
 Mother, the
 ancient
 Mariner is
 refreshed
 with rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
 I was so light—almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth And soon I heard a roaring wind:
 'sounds and It did not come anear;
 seeth But with its sound it shook the sails,
 strange That were so thin and sere.
 sights and
 commo-
 tions in the
 sky and the
 element.

The upper air burst into life!
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 To and fro they were hurried about!
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge;
 And the rain poured down from one black
 cloud;
 The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side:
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag,
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies The loud wind never reached the ship,
 of the Yet now the ship moved on!
 ship's crew Beneath the lightning and the Moon
 are in- The dead men gave a groan.
 spired, and
 the ship
 moves on; They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
 It had been strange, even in a dream,
 To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
 Yet never a breeze up blew;
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,

Where they were wont to do;
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
 We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
 Stood by me, knee to knee:
 The body and I pulled at one rope,
 But he said nought to me.'

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
 'Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
 Which to their corses came again,
 But a troop of spirits blest:

but not by
 the souls of
 the men
 nor by
 daemons of
 earth or
 middle air,
 but by a
 blessed
 troop of
 angelic
 spirits, sent
 down by
 the invoca-
 tion of the
 guardian
 saint.

For when it dawned—they dropt their
 arms,
 And clustered round the mast;
 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
 mouths,
 And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
 Then darted to the Sun;
 Slowly the sounds came back again,
 Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
 I heard the skylark sing;
 Sometimes all little birds that are,
 How they seemed to fill the sea and air
 With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
 Now like a lonely flute;
 And now it is an angel's song,
 That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
 A pleasant noise till noon,
 A noise like of a hidden brook
 In the leafy month of June,
 That to the sleeping woods all night
 Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
 Yet never a breeze did breathe:
 Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
 Moved onward from beneath.

The
 lonesome
 Spirit from
 the South
 Pole carries
 on the ship
 as far as
 the Line, in
 obedience
 to the an-
 gelic troop,
 but still re-
 quireth
 vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
 From the land of mist and snow,
 The spirit slid: and it was he
 That made the ship to go.
 The sails at noon left off their tune,
 And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
 Had fixed her to the ocean:
 But in a minute she 'gan stir,
 With a short uneasy motion—
 Backwards and forwards half her length
 With a short uneasy motion.

Then, like a pawing horse let go,
 She made a sudden bound:
 It flung the blood into my head,
 And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar
 Spirit's
 fellow-
 daemons,
 the invis-
 ible inhabi-
 tants of the

How long in that same fit I lay,
 I have not to declare;
 But ere my living life returned,
 I heard and in my soul discerned
 Two voices in the air.

“Is it he?” quoth one, “Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

“The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.”

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honeydew:
Quoth he, “The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.”

element,
take part in
his wrong;
and two of
them re-
late, one to
the other,
that
penance
long and
heavy for
the ancient
mariner
hath been
accorded to
the Polar
Spirit, who
returneth
southward.

PART THE SIXTH

First Voice.

“But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the Ocean doing?”

Second Voice.

“Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

“If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.”

First Voice.

The Mariner hath
 been cast
 into a
 trance; for
 the angelic
 power
 causeth the
 vessel to
 drive
 northward
 faster than
 human life
 could en-
 dure.

"But why drives on that ship so fast,
 Without or wave or wind?"

Second Voice.

"The air is cut away before,
 And closes from behind.

"Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
 Or we shall be belated:
 For slow and slow that ship will go,
 When the Mariner's trance is abated."

The super-
 natural
 motion is
 retarded;
 the Mari-
 ner awakes
 and his
 penance
 begins
 anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
 As in a gentle weather:
 'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was
 high;
 The dead men stood together.
 All stood together on the deck,
 For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
 All fixed on me their stony eyes,
 That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
 Had never passed away:
 I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
 Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse
 is finally
 expiated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
 I viewed the ocean green,
 And looked far forth, yet little saw
 Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,

And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the
ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth his
native
country.

The angelic
spirits
leave the
dead
bodies, and
appear in
their own
forms of
light.

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!

He singeth loud his godly hymns
 That he makes in the wood.
 He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
 The Albatross's blood.

PART THE SEVENTH

'This Hermit good lives in that wood
 Which slopes down to the sea.
 How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
 He loves to talk with marineres
 That come from a far countree.

The Hermit
 of the Wood

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
 He hath a cushion plump:
 It is the moss that wholly hides
 The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
 "Why this is strange, I trow!
 Where are those lights so many and fair,
 That signal made but now?"

"Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit said—
 "And they answered not our cheer!
 The planks look warped! and see those
 sails,

approach-
 eth the
 ship with
 wonder.

How thin they are and sere!
 I never saw aught like to them,
 Unless perchance it were

"Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
 My forest-brook along;
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
 That eats the she-wolf's young."

“Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—”
 (The Pilot made reply)
 “I am a-feared”—“Push on, push on!”
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
 But I nor spake nor stirred;
 The boat came close beneath the ship,
 And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on,
 Still louder and more dread:
 It reached the ship, it split the bay;
 The ship went down like lead.

The ship
 suddenly
 sinketh.

The ancient
 Mariner is
 saved in
 the Pilot's
 boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
 Which sky and ocean smote,
 Like one that hath been seven days
 drowned
 My body lay afloat;
 But swift as dreams, myself I found
 Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
 The boat spun round and round;
 And all was still, save that the hill
 Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
 And fell down in a fit;
 The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
 And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
 Who now doth crazy go.

Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.

“Ha! ha!” quoth he, “full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.”

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!

The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

“O shrive me, shrive me, holy man!”

The Hermit crossed his brow.

“Say quick,” quoth he, “I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?”

Forthwith this frame of mine was
wrenched

With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

The ancient
Mariner
earnestly
entreateth
the Hermit
to shrive
him; and
the penance
of life falls
on him.

And ever
and anon
through-
out his
future life
an agony
constrain-
eth him to
travel from
land to
land,

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
 Alone on a wide wide sea:
 So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
 Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
 'Tis sweeter far to me,
 To walk together to the kirk
 With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
 And all together pray,
 While each to his great Father bends,
 Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
 And youths and maidens gay!

and to
 teach, by
 his own
 example,
 love and
 reverence
 to all things
 that God
 made and
 loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
 He prayeth well, who loveth well
 Both man and bird and beast.
 He prayeth best, who loveth best
 All things both great and small;
 For the dear God who loveth us,
 He made and loveth all.'

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
 Whose beard with age is hoar,
 Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
 Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
 And is of sense forlorn:
 A sadder and a wiser man,
 He rose the morrow morn.

LOVE

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand ;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined : and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace ;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face !

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight !

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land !

And how she wept, and clasped his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain.

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
 A dying man he lay.

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
 Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
 The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
 Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin-shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
 I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stepped—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
 She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up,
 And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
 The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

THE NIGHTINGALE

A CONVERSATION POEM: WRITTEN IN

APRIL, 1798

No cloud, no relique of the sunken day
Distinguishes the west, no long thin slip
Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge!
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
But hear no murmuring: it flows silently,
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
A balmy night! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
And hark! the nightingale begins its song,
'Most musical, most melancholy' bird!
A melancholy bird? Oh! idle thought!
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
But some night-wandering man whose heart was
pierced
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so, poor wretch! filled all things with himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
Of his own sorrow) he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain.
And many a poet echoes the conceit;

Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
When he had better far have stretched his limbs
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
By sun or moon-light, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his fame forgetful! so his fame
Should share in Nature's immortality,
A venerable thing! and so his song
Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
Be loved like Nature! But 'twill not be so;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ballrooms and hot theatres, they still
Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My friend, and thou, our sister! we have learnt
A different lore: we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance! 'Tis the merry nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music!

And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and kingcups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew

So many nightingales; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such an harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might
almost

Forget it was not day! On moonlight bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half-disclosed,
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and
full,

Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade
Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a lady vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove)
Glides through the pathways; she knows all their
notes,

That gentle maid! and oft, a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
An hundred airy harps! And she hath watched
Many a nightingale perched giddily
On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,

And to that motion tune his wanton song
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O warbler! till to-morrow eve,
And you, my friends! farewell, a short farewell!
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—That strain again?
Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,
And bid us listen! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's playmate. He knows well
The evening-star; and once, when he awoke
In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's
dream),

I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped tears,
Did glitter in the yellow moonbeam! Well!—
It is a father's tale: But if that Heaven
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy. Once more farewell,
Sweet nightingale! Once more, my friends! fare-
well.

FROST AT MIDNIGHT

THE frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud—and hark, again! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,

Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings-on of life,
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not;
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of Nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling spirit
By its own moods interprets, everywhere
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of thought.

But O! how oft,
How oft, at school, with most believing mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
To watch that fluttering *stranger*! and as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birthplace, and the old church-tower,
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come!
So gazed I, till the soothing things, I dreamt,
Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams!
And so I brooded all the following morn,

Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fixed with mock study on my swimming book:
Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,
For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,
Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
My playmate when we both were clothed alike!

Dear babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
And in far other scenes! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But *thou*, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great universal Teacher! He shall mould
Thy Spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch

Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eve-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet moon.

SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY NATURAL

WRITTEN IN GERMANY

IF I had but two little wings,
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear!
But thoughts like these are idle things,
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly:
I'm always with you in my sleep!
The world is all one's own.
But then one wakes, and where am I?
All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids:
So I love to wake ere break of day:
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet, while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

NAMES

[FROM LESSING]

I ASKED my fair one happy day,
What I should call her in my lay;
By what sweet name from Rome or Greece;
Lalage, Neaera, Chloris,
Sappho, Lesbia, or Doris,
Arethusa or Lucrece.

'Ah!' replied my gentle fair,
'Beloved, what are names but air?
Choose thou whatever suits the line;
Call me Sappho, call me Chloris,
Call me Lalage or Doris,
Only, only call me Thine.'

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY

AN ALLEGORY

ON the wide level of a mountain's head,
(I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,
Two lovely children run an endless race,
A sister and a brother!
This far outstript the other;
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
And looks and listens for the boy behind:
For he, alas! is blind!
O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed,
And knows not whether he be first or last.

CHRISTABEL

PART THE FIRST¹

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock;
Tu—whit!——Tu—whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff, which
From her kennel beneath the rock
Maketh answer to the clock,

There is a second part, but the poem was never finished.

Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin grey cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is grey:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late,
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak,
But moss and rarest mistletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is, she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.
Hush beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandalled were
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly!

'Mary mother, save me now!'
(Said Christabel) 'And who art thou?'

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet:—
'Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness:

Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!
Said Christabel, 'How camest thou here?'
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet:—

'My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine:
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white;
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:
He placed me underneath this oak,
He swore they would return with haste;
Whither they went I cannot tell—
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle-bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee.'

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand
And comforted fair Geraldine:
'O well, bright dame! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline;

And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.'

She rose: and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel:
'All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell;
Sir Leoline is weak in health
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me.'

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well;
A little door she opened straight,
All in the middle of the gate;
The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched out.
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate:
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side,
'Praise we the Virgin all divine

Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!
'Alas, alas!' said Geraldine,
'I cannot speak for weariness.'
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make!
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch:
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will!
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
'O softly tread,' said Christabel,
'My father seldom sleepeth well.'

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,

As still as death with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

'O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers.'

'And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?'
Christabel answered—'Woe is me!
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the grey-haired friar tell,
How on her deathbed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear! that thou wert here!'
'I would,' said Geraldine, 'she were!'

But soon with altered voice, said she—
‘Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine
I have power to bid thee flee.’
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
‘Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! ’tis given to me.’

Then Christabel knelt by the lady’s side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
‘Alas!’ said she, ‘this ghastly ride—
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!’
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, ‘Tis over now!’

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:
Her fair large eyes ’gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
‘All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.’

Quoth Christabel, 'So let it be!'
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side——
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
Then suddenly as one defied
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the Maiden's side!—
And in her arms the maid she took,

Ah wel-a-day!

And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say:

'In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,

Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;
 But vainly thou warrest,
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning,
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair:
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in
 charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.'

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree.
 Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows;
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?

And lo! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine! one hour was thine—
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—whoo!
Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and fell!

And see! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No, doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
What if she knew her mother near?
tairn] tarn; a small lake among the mountains.

But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call:
For the blue sky bends over all!

DEJECTION

AN ODE

Late, late yestreen I saw the new moon,
With the old moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.

BALLAD OF SIR PATRICK SPENCE.

I

WELL! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Aeolian lute,
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the new moon winter-bright!
And overspread with phantom light,
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread
But rimm'd and circled by a silver thread)
I see the old moon in her lap, foretelling
The coming-on of rain and squally blast.
And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they
awed,
And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and
live!

II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear—
O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen:
Yon crescent moon, as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

III

My genial spirits fail,
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!

And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,

Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud

Enveloping the Earth—

And from the soul itself must there be sent

A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

V

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.

Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and Life's Effluence, cloud at once and shower,
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding nature to us gives in dower,

A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—

We in ourselves rejoice!

And thence flows all that charms our ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

VI

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff

Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:

For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed
mine,

But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,
But oh! each visitation

Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination.

For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;

And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man—

This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!

I turn from you, and listen to the wind,

Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth! Thou wind, that ravest with-
out,

Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,

Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
Of dark brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Makest Devils' yule, with worse than wintry
song,

The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.

Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty Poet, e'en to Frenzy bold!

What tell'st thou now about?

'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting
wounds—

At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the
cold!

But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!

And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is
over—

It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and
loud!

A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight,

As Otway's self had framed the tender lay,

'Tis of a little child

Upon a lonesome wild,

Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:

And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,

And now screams loud, and hopes to make her
mother hear.

VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!

Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,

And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,

May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,

Silent as though they watched the sleeping
Earth!

With light heart may she rise,

Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,

Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice:
To her may all things live, from Pole to Pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul!

O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus may'st thou ever, evermore rejoice.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION

Do you ask what the birds say? The Sparrow, the
Dove,

The Linnet and Thrush say, 'I love and I love!'
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong;
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm
weather,

And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the Lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings; and for ever sings he—
'I love my Love, and my Love loves me!'

INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN ON A HEATH

THIS sycamore, oft musical with bees,—
Such tents the patriarchs loved! O long unharmed
May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy
The small round basin, which this jutting stone
Keeps pure from falling leaves! Long may the
spring,

Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the traveller
With soft and even pulse! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
Which at the bottom, like a fairy's page,

As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the fount.
Here twilight is and coolness: here is moss,
A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.
Thou may'st toil far and find no second tree.
Drink, pilgrim, here! Here rest! and if thy heart
Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
Thy spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
Or passing gale or hum of murmuring bees!

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?—
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree!
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

YOUTH AND AGE

VERSE, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woeful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands

How lightly then it flashed along:
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah woeful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here:
O Youth! for years so many and sweet
'Tis known that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—

It cannot be that thou art gone!
Thy vesper bell hath not yet tolled:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on
To make believe that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But Springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are housemates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:

—That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest
That may not rudely be dismiss,
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

LINES COMPOSED FEBRUARY 21, 1827

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where Amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar
flow.

Bloom, O ye Amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my
soul?

Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.

EPITAPH

STOP, Christian passer-by!—Stop, child of God,
And read with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seemed he.
O, lift one thought in prayer for S.T.C.;

That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death!
Mercy for praise—to be forgiven for fame
He asked, and hoped, through Christ. Do thou the
same!

LOVE'S APPARITION AND EVANISHMENT

AN ALLEGORIC ROMANCE

LIKE a lone Arab, old and blind,
Some caravan had left behind,
Who sits beside a ruined well,
Where the shy sand-asps bask and swell;
And now he hangs his aged head aslant,
And listens for a human sound—in vain!
And now the aid, which Heaven alone can grant,
Upturns his eyeless face from heaven to gain;—
Even thus, in vacant mood, one sultry hour,
Resting my eye upon a drooping plant,
With brow low-bent, within my garden-bower,
I sate upon the couch of camomile;
And—whether 'twas a transient sleep, perchance,
Flitted across the idle brain, the while
I watched the sickly calm with aimless scope,
In my own heart; or that, indeed a trance,
Turned my eye inward—thee, O genial Hope,
Love's elder sister! thee did I behold,
Drest as a bridesmaid, but all pale and cold,
With roseless cheek, all pale and cold and dim,
Lie lifeless at my feet!
And then came Love, a sylph in bridal trim,
And stood beside my seat;
She bent, and kissed her sister's lips,

As she was wont to do ;—
Alas ! 'twas but a chilling breath
Woke just enough of life in death
To make Hope die anew.

L'ENVOY

In vain we supplicate the Powers above ;
There is no resurrection for the Love
That, nurst in tenderest care, yet fades away
In the chilled heart by gradual self-decay.

ROBERT TANNAHILL

1774–1810

JESSIE, THE FLOWER O' DUNBLANE

THE sun has gane down o'er the lofty Benlomond,
And left the red clouds to preside o'er the scene,
While lanely I stray, in the calm simmer gloamin',
To muse on sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dunblane.
How sweet is the brier wi' its saft faulding blossom,
And sweet is the birk, wi' its mantle o' green ;
Yet sweeter, and fairer, and dear to this bosom,
Is lovely young Jessie, the flower o' Dunblane.

She's modest as ony, and blythe as she's bonnie,
For guileless simplicity marks her its ain ;
And far be the villain, divested o' feelin',
Wha'd blight in its bloom the sweet flower o'
Dunblane.

Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'ening,
Thou'rt dear to the echoes o' Calderwood glen :
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,
Is charming young Jessie, the flower o' Dunblane.

THE BRAES O' GLENIFFER

KEEN blaws the wind o'er the braes o' Gleniffer,
The auld castle's turrets are covered wi' snaw;
How changed frae the time when I met wi' my
lover

Amang the brume bushes by Stanley green shaw!
The wild flowers o' simmer were spread a' sae
bonnie,

The mavis sang sweet frae the green birken tree;
But far to the camp they hae marched my dear
Johnnie,

And now it is winter wi' nature and me.

Then ilk thing around us was blythesome and
cheerie,

Then ilk thing around us was bonnie and braw;
Now naething is heard but the win' whistling
dreary,

And naething is seen but the wide-spreading
snaw.

The trees are a' bare, and the birds mute and
dowie;

They shake the cauld drift frae their wings as
they flee,

And chirp out their plaints, seeming wae for my
Johnnie;—

'Tis winter wi' them and 'tis winter wi' me.

Yon cauld sleety cloud skiffs alang the bleak
mountain,

And shakes the dark firs on the steep rocky brae;
While down the deep glen brawls the sna'-flooded
fountain,

That murmured sae sweet to my laddie an' me.

dowie] dull, sad.

'Tis no its loud roar on the wintry win' swellin',
'Tis no the cauld blast brings the tears i' my e'e;
For, O, gin I saw but my bonnie Scotch callan,
The dark days o' winter were simmir to me!

ROBERT SOUTHEY

1774-1843

AFTER BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.
She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.
Old Kaspar took it from the boy
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh
'Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,
'Who fell in the great victory.
'I find them in the garden,
For there 's many here about,
And often when I go to plough
The ploughshare turns them out,
callan] lad.

For many thousand men,' said he
'Were slain in that great victory.'

'Now tell us what 'twas all about,'
Young Peterkin he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
'Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for.'

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,
'Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for
I could not well make out.
But everybody said,' quoth he,
'That 'twas a famous victory.'

'My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly:
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

'With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then
And new-born baby died:
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

'They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun:
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
And our good Prince Eugene ;'
'Why, 'twas a very wicked thing !'
Said little Wilhelmine ;
'Nay . . nay . . my little girl,' quoth he,
'It was a famous victory.

'And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win.'
'But what good came of it at last ?'
Quoth little Peterkin :—
'Why, that I cannot tell,' said he,
'But 'twas a famous victory.'

AMONG HIS BOOKS

My days among the Dead are past ;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old :
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal
And seek relief in woe ;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead ; with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead ; anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity ;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was still as she could be,
Her sails from heaven received no motion,
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock
The waves flowed over the Inchcape Rock ;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The worthy Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock ;
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the Rock was hid by the surge's swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell ;
And then they knew the perilous Rock,
And blessed the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The Sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day ;
The sea-birds screamed as they wheeled round,
And there was joyaunce in the sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen
A darker speck on the ocean green ;
Sir Ralph the Rover walked his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of spring,
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess,
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float,
Quoth he, 'My men, put out the boat,
And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok'.

The boat is lowered, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And he cut the Bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sunk the Bell with a gurgling sound,
The bubbles rose and burst around:
Quoth Sir Ralph, 'The next who comes to the
Rock
Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok.'

Sir Ralph the Rover sailed away,
He scoured the seas for many a day;
And now grown rich with plundered store,
He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky
They cannot see the Sun on high;
The wind hath blown a gale all day,
At evening it hath died away.

On deck the Rover takes his stand,
So dark it is they see no land;
Quoth Sir Ralph, 'It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising Moon.'

'Canst hear,' said one, 'the breakers roar?
For methinks we should be near the shore.'
'Now where we are I cannot tell,
But I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell.'

They hear no sound, the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen they drift along,
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock,---
'Oh Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock!'

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair;
He curst himself in his despair;
The waves rush in on every side,
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But even in his dying fear
One dreadful sound could the Rover hear,
A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE

A WELL there is in the west country,
And a clearer one never was seen;
There is not a wife in the west country
But has heard of the Well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm-tree stand beside,
And behind doth an ash-tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne;
Joyfully he drew nigh,
For from cock-crow he had been travelling,
And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he,
And he sat down upon the bank
Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the house hard by
At the Well to fill his pail;
On the Well-side he rested it,
And he bade the stranger hail.

'Now art thou a bachelor, stranger?' quoth he,
'For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drunk this day
That ever thou didst in thy life.

'Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast,
Ever here in Cornwall been?
For an if she have, I'll venture my life
She has drunk of the Well of St. Keyne.'

'I have left a good woman who never was here,'
The stranger he made reply,
'But that my draught should be the better for
that,
I pray you answer me why?'

'St. Keyne,' quoth the Cornish-man, 'many a time
Drank of this crystal Well,
And before the angel summoned her,
She laid on the water a spell.

'If the husband of this gifted Well
Shall drink before his wife,
A happy man thenceforth is he,
For he shall be master for life.

'But if the wife should drink of it first,
God help the husband then!'
The stranger stooped to the Well of St. Keyne,
And drank of the water again.

'You drank of the Well I warrant betimes?'
He to the Cornish-man said:
But the Cornish-man smiled as the stranger spake,
And sheepishly shook his head.

'I hastened as soon as the wedding was done,
And left my wife in the porch;
But i' faith she had been wiser than me,
For she took a bottle to church.'

WRITTEN ON THE FIRST OF DECEMBER [1793]

THOUGH now no more the musing ear
Delights to listen to the breeze,
That lingers o'er the green-wood shade
I love thee, Winter! well.

Sweet are the harmonies of Spring,
Sweet is the Summer's evening gale,
And sweet the Autumnal winds that shake
The many-coloured grove.

And pleasant to the sobered soul
The silence of the wintry scene,
When Nature shrouds herself, entranced
In deep tranquillity.

Not undelightful now to roam
The wild heath sparkling on the sight;
Not undelightful now to pace
The forest's ample rounds;

And see the spangled branches shine ;
And mark the moss of many a hue
That varies the old tree's brown bark,
Or o'er the grey stone spreads.

And see the clustered berries bright
Amid the holly's gay green leaves ;
The ivy round the leafless oak
That clasps its foliage close.

So Virtue diffident of strength
Clings to Religion's former aid ;
So by Religion's aim upheld,
Endures calamity.

Nor void of beauties now the spring,
Whose waters hid from summer-sun
Have soothed the thirsty pilgrim's ear
With more than melody.

Green moss shines there with ice incased ;
The long grass bends its spear-like form :
And lovely is the silvery scene
When faint the sun-beams smile.

Reflection too may love the hour
When Nature, hid in Winter's grave,
No more expands the bursting bud,
Or bids the flowret bloom ;

For Nature soon in Spring's best charms,
Shall rise revived from Winter's grave,
Expand the bursting bud again,
And bid the flower re-bloom.

THALABA AND THE MAGIC THREAD

He found a Woman in the cave,
A solitary Woman,
Who by the fire was spinning,
And singing as she spun.
The pine boughs were cheerfully blazing,
And her face was bright with the flame;
Her face was as a damsel's face,
And yet her hair was grey.
She bade him welcome with a smile,
And still continued spinning,
And singing as she spun....

The thread she spun it gleamed like gold
In the light of the odorous fire,
Yet was it so wondrously thin,
That, save when it shone in the light,
You might look for it closely in vain.
The youth sate watching it,
And she observed his wonder,
And then again she spake,
And still her speech was song;
'Now twine it round thy hands I say,
Now twine it round thy hands I pray;
My thread is small, my thread is fine,
But he must be
A stronger than thee,
Who can break this thread of mine!'

And up she raised her bright blue eyes,
And sweetly she smiled on him,
And he conceived no ill;
And round and round his right hand,
And round and round his left,

He wound the thread so fine.
And then again the Woman spake,
And still her speech was song,
'Now thy strength, O Stranger, strain!
Now then break the slender chain.'

Thalaba strove, but the thread
By magic hands was spun,
And in his cheek the flush of shame
Arose, commixed with fear.
She beheld and laughed at him,
And then again she sung,
'My thread is small, my thread is fine,
But he must be
A stronger man than thee,
Who can break this thread of mine!'

And up she raised her bright blue eyes,
And fiercely she smiled on him:
'I thank thee, I thank thee, Hodeirah's son!
I thank thee for doing what can't be undone!
For binding thyself in the chain I have spun!'
Then from his head she wrenched
A lock of his raven hair,
And cast it in the fire,
And cried aloud as it burnt,
Sister! Sister! hear my voice!
Sister! Sister! come and rejoice!
The thread is spun,
The prize is won,
The work is done,
For I have made captive Hodeirah's Son.'

Thalaba.

THE IMMORTALITY OF LOVE

THEY sin who tell us Love can die.
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In Heaven Ambition cannot dwell,
Nor Avarice in the vaults of Hell;
Earthly these passions of the Earth,
They perish where they have their birth;
But Love is undestructible.
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth;
Too oft on Earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times oppressed,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest;
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of Love is there.
Oh! when a mother meets on high
The Babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?

The Curse of Kehama.

BISHOP HATTO AND THE RATS

THE summer and autumn had been so wet,
That in winter the corn was growing yet,
'Twas a piteous sight to see all around
The grain lie rotting on the ground.
Every day the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door,
For he had a plentiful last-year's store,

And all the neighbourhood could tell
His granaries were furnished well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay;
He bade them to his great Barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear,
The poor folk flocked from far and near;
The great Barn was full as it could hold
Of women and children, and young and old.

Then when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door;
And while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the Barn and burnt them all.

'I'faith 'tis an excellent bonfire!' quoth he,
'And the country is greatly obliged to me,
For ridding it in these times forlorn
Of Rats that only consume the corn.'

So then to his palace returned he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man;
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning as he entered the hall
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat like death all over him came,
For the Rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he looked there came a man from his farm—
He had a countenance white with alarm;
'My Lord, I opened your granaries this morn,
And the Rats had eaten all your corn.'

Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be,
'Fly! my Lord Bishop, fly,' quoth he,
'Ten thousand Rats are coming this way,..
The Lord forgive you for yesterday!'

'I'll go to my tower on the Rhine,' replied he,
'Tis the safest place in Germany;
The walls are high and the shores are steep,
And the stream is strong and the water deep.'

Bishop Hatto fearfully hastened away,
And he crossed the Rhine without delay,
And reached his tower, and barred with care
All the windows, doors, and loop-holes there.

He laid him down and closed his eyes;..
But soon a scream made him arise,
He started and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow from whence the screaming came.

He listened and looked;..it was only the Cat;
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sat screaming, mad with fear
At the Army of Rats that were drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climbed the shores so steep,
And up the Tower their way is bent,
To do the work for which they were sent.

They are not to be told by the dozen or score,
By thousands they come, and by myriads and more,
Such numbers had never been heard of before,
Such a judgement had never been witnessed of yore.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did he tell,
As louder and louder drawing near
The gnawing of their teeth he could hear.

And in at the windows and in at the door,
And through the walls helter-skelter they pour,
And down from the ceiling and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones;
They gnawed the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgement on him!

CHARLES LAMB

1775-1834

LINES WRITTEN IN MY ALBUM

FRESH clad from heaven in robes of white,
A young probationer of light,
Thou wert, my soul, an Album bright,

A spotless leaf; but thought, and care,
And friend and foe, in foul or fair,
Have 'written strange defeatures' there;

And Time, with heaviest hand of all,
Like that fierce writing on the wall,
Hath stamped sad dates—he can't recall;

And error, gilding worst designs—
Like speckled snake that strays and shines—
Betrays his path by crooked lines;

And vice hath left his ugly blot;
And good resolves, a moment hot,
Fairly began—but finished not;

And fruitless, late remorse doth trace—
Like Hebrew lore, a backward pace
Her irrecoverable race.

Disjointed numbers; sense unknit;
Huge reams of folly; shreds of wit;
Compose the mingled mass of it.

My scalded eyes no longer brook
Upon this ink-blurred thing to look—
Go, shut the leaves, and clasp the book.

ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN

I saw where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work;
A flow'ret crushéd in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,
Was in her cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying:
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark: ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say that Nature blind
Checked her hand, and changed her mind,

Just when she had exactly wrought
A finished pattern without fault ?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lacked she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sickened)
That should thy little limbs have quickened ?
Limbs so firm, they seemed to assure
Life of health, and days mature ;
Woman's self in miniature !
Limbs so fair, they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry
That babe or mother, one must die ;
So in mercy left the stock
And cut the branch ; to save the shock
Of young years widowed, and the pain
When Single State comes back again
To the lone man who, 'reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maiméd life ?
The economy of Heaven is dark,
And wisest clerks have missed the mark,
Why human buds, like this, should fall
More brief than fly ephemeral
That has his day ; while shrivelled crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones ;
And crabbéd use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
—Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss :
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells, and baby clothes ;
Coral redder than those lips
Which pale death did late eclipse ;

Music framed for infants' glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave,
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie—
A more harmless vanity?

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood;
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces,

How some they have died, and some they have left
me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

HESTER

WHEN maidens such as Hester die
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try
With vain endeavour.

A month or more hath she been dead;
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flushed her spirit:

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call: if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool;
But she was trained in Nature's school;
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind;
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind;
 Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour! gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
 Some summer morning—

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
 A sweet forewarning?

CHARLES AND MARY (1764–1847) LAMB

A CHILD

A CHILD's a plaything for an hour;
Its pretty tricks we try
For that or for a longer space—
 Then tire, and lay it by.

But I knew one that to itself
All seasons could control;
That would have mocked the sense of pain
 Out of a grievèd soul.

Thou straggler into loving arms,
Young climber-up of knees,
When I forget thy thousand ways
 Then life and all shall cease.

GOING INTO BREECHES

Joy to Philip, he this day
Has his long coats cast away,
And (the childish season gone)
Puts the manly breeches on.
Officer on gay parade,
Red-coat in his first cockade,
Bridegroom in his wedding trim,
Birthday beau surpassing him,
Never did with conscious gait
Strut about in half the state,
Or the pride (yet free from sin)
Of my little MANIKIN:
Never was there pride, or bliss,
Half so rational as his.
Sashes, frocks, to those that need 'em—
Philip's limbs have got their freedom—
He can run, or he can ride,
And do twenty things beside,
Which his petticoats forbade:
Is he not a happy lad?
Now he's under other banners,
He must leave his former manners;
Bid adieu to female games,
And forget their very names,
Puss in Corners, Hide and Seek,
Sports for girls and punies weak!
Baste the Bear he now may play at,
Leap-frog, Foot-ball, sport away at,
Show his skill and strength at Cricket,
Mark his distance, pitch his wicket,
Run about in winter's snow
Till his cheeks and fingers glow,

Climb a tree, or scale a wall,
Without any fear to fall.
If he get a hurt or bruise,
To complain he must refuse,
Though the anguish and the smart
Go unto his little heart,
He must have his courage ready,
Keep his voice and visage steady,
Brace his eye-balls stiff as drum,
That a tear may never come,
And his grief must only speak
From the colour in his cheek.
This and more he must endure,
Hero he in miniature!
This and more must now be done
Now the breeches are put on.

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE

1775-1841

TO NIGHT

MYSTERIOUS Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed

Within thy beams, O sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,

That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us
blind!

Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

1775-1864

ROSE AYLMER

AN what avails the sceptred race!

Ah what the form divine!

What every virtue, every grace!

Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes

May weep, but never see,

A night of memories and of sighs

I consecrate to thee.

THE MAID'S LAMENT

I LOVED him not; and yet now he is gone

I feel I am alone.

I checked him while he spoke; yet could he speak,

Alas! I would not check.

For reasons not to love him once I sought,

And wearied all my thought

To vex myself and him: I now would give

My love, could he but live

Who lately lived for me, and, when he found

'Twas vain, in holy ground

He hid his face amid the shades of death.

I waste for him my breath

Who wasted his for me: but mine returns,

And this lorn bosom burns

With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,
And waking me to weep
Tears that had melted his soft heart: for years
Wept he as bitter tears.
Merciful God! such was his latest prayer,
These may she never share!
Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,
Than daisies in the mould,
Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,
His name and life's brief date.
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,
And, O, pray too for me!

FAESULAN IDYL

HERE, when precipitate Spring with one light bound
Into hot Summer's lusty arms expires;
And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,
Soft airs, that want the lute to play with them,
And softer sighs, that know not what they want;
Under a wall, beneath an orange-tree
Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier ones
Of sights in Fiesole right up above,
While I was gazing a few paces off
At what they seemed to show me with their nods,
Their frequent whispers and their pointing shoots,
A gentle maid came down the garden steps
And gathered the pure treasure in her lap.
I heard the branches rustle, and stept forth
To drive the ox away, or mule, or goat,
(Such I believed it must be); for sweet scents
Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter thoughts,
And nurse and pillow the dull memory
That would let drop without them her best stores.

They bring me tales of youth and tones of love,
And 'tis and ever was my wish and way
To let all flowers live freely, and all die,
Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart,
Among their kindred in their native place.
I never pluck the rose; the violet's head
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank
And not reproacht me; the ever-sacred cup
Of the pure lily hath between my hands
Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.
I saw the light that made the glossy leaves
More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer cheek
Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit;
I saw the foot, that although half-erect
From its grey slippers could not lift her up
To what she wanted; I held down a branch,
And gathered her some blossoms, since their hour
Was come, and bees had wounded them, and flies
Of harder wing were working their way through
And scattering them in fragments under foot.
So crisp were some, they rattled unevolved,
Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,
For such appear the petals when detachd,
Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,
And like snow not seen through, by eye or sun;
Yet every one her gown received from me
Was fairer than the first; . . I thought not so,
But so she praised them to reward my care.
I said: *you find the largest.*

This indeed,

Cried she, *is large and sweet.*

She held one forth,

Whether for me to look at or to take
She knew not, nor did I; but taking it

Would best have solved (and this she felt) her doubts.

I dared not touch it; for it seemed a part
Of her own self; fresh, full, the most mature
Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch
To fall, and yet unfallen.

She drew back.

The boon she tendered, and then, finding not
The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,
Dropt it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

TO ROBERT BROWNING

THERE is delight in singing, tho' none hear
Beside the singer: and there is delight
In praising, tho' the praiser sit alone
And see the praised far off him, far above.
Shakespeare is not our poet, but the world's,
Therefore on him no speech! and brief for thee,
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man hath walked along our roads with step
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing: the breeze
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song.

IANTHE

FROM you, Ianthé, little troubles pass
Like little ripples down a sunny river;
Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,
Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever.

YEARS AFTER

'Do you remember me? or are you proud?'
 Lightly advancing thro' her star-trimmed crowd,
 Ianthe said, and looked into my eyes.
 'A *yes*, a *yes* to both: for memory
 Where you but once have been must ever be,
 And at your voice Pride from his throne must rise!'

EPIGRAMS

No, my own love of other years!
 No, it must never be.
 Much rests with you that yet endears,
 Alas! but what with me?
 Could those bright years o'er me revolve
 So gay, o'er you so fair,
 The pearl of life we would dissolve
 And each the cup might share.
 You show that truth can ne'er decay,
 Whatever fate befalls;
 I, that the myrtle and the bay
 Shoot fresh on ruined walls.

I wonder not that youth remains
 With you, wherever else she flies:
 Where could she find such fair domains,
 Where bask beneath such sunny eyes?

Years, many parti-coloured years,
 Some have crept on, and some have flown,
 Since first before me fell those tears
 I never could see fall alone.

Years, not so many, are to come,
Years not so varied, when from you
One more will fall: when, carried home,
I see it not, nor hear *Adieu*.

Well I remember how you smiled
To see me write your name upon
The soft sea-sand,—‘O! what a child!
You think you’re writing upon stone!’

I have since written what no tide
Shall ever wash away, what men
Unborn shall read o’er ocean wide
And find *Ianthe’s* name again.

OF CLEMENTINA

In *Clementina’s* artless mien
Lucilla asks me what I see,
And are the roses of sixteen
Enough for me?

Lucilla asks, if that be all,
Have I not culled as sweet before:
Ah yes, *Lucilla!* and their fall
I still deplore.

I now behold another scene,
Where Pleasure beams with Heaven’s own light,
More pure, more constant, more serene,
And not less bright.

Faith, on whose breast the Loves repose,
Whose chain of flowers no force can sever,
And Modesty who, when she goes,
Is gone for ever.

TWENTY YEARS HENCE

TWENTY years hence my eyes may grow,
If not quite dim, yet rather so;
Yet yours from others they shall know,
Twenty years hence.

Twenty years hence, though it may hap
That I be called to take a nap
In a cool cell where thunder-clap
Was never heard,

There breathe but o'er my arch of grass
A not too sadly sighed 'Alas!'
And I shall catch, ere you can pass,
That wingèd word.

IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON

IPHIGENEIA, when she heard her doom
At Aulis, and when all beside the king
Had gone away, took his right-hand, and said,
'O father! I am young and very happy.
I do not think the pious Calchas heard
Distinctly what the Goddess spake. Old-age
Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who knew
My voice so well, sometimes misunderstood
While I was resting on her knee both arms
And hitting it to make her mind my words,
And looking in her face and she in mine,
Might not he also hear one word amiss,
Spoken from so far off, even from Olympus?'
The father placed his cheek upon her head,
And tears dropt down it, but the king of men

Replied not. Then the maiden spake once more.
'O father! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st thou not
Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,
Listened to fondly, and awakened me
To hear my voice amid the voice of birds,
When it was inarticulate as theirs,
And the down deadened it within the nest?'
He moved her gently from him, silent still,
And this, and this alone, brought tears from her,
Altho' she saw fate nearer: then with sighs,
'I thought to have laid down my hair before
Benignant Artemis, and not have dimmed
Her polisht altar with my virgin blood;
I thought to have selected the white flowers
To please the Nymphs, and to have asked of each
By name, and with no sorrowful regret,
Whether, since both my parents willed the change,
I might at Hymen's feet, bend my clipt brow;
And (after these who mind us girls the most)
Adore our own Athena, that she would
Regard me mildly with her azure eyes.
But, father! to see you no more, and see
Your love, O father! go ere I am gone. . . .'
Gently he moved her off, and drew her back,
Bending his lofty head far over her's,
And the dark depths of nature heaved and burst.
He turned away; not far, but silent still.
She now first shuddered; for in him, so nigh,
So long a silence seemed the approach of death,
And like it. Once again she raised her voice.
'O father! if the ships are now detained,
And all your vows move not the Gods above,
When the knife strikes me there will be one prayer
The less to them: and purer can there be

Any, or more fervent than the daughter's prayer
For her dear father's safety and success ?'
A groan that shook him shook not his resolve.
An aged man now entered, and without
One word, stepped slowly on, and took the wrist
Of the pale maiden. She looked up, and saw
The fillet of the priest and calm cold eyes.
Then turned she where her parent stood, and
cried
'O father! grieve no more: the ships can sail.'

THE END

I STROVE with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

ON CATULLUS

TELL me not what too well I know
About the bard of Sirmio.
Yes, in Thalia's son
Such stains there are—as when a Grace
Sprinkles another's laughing face
With nectar, and runs on.

PROUD WORD YOU NEVER SPOKE

PROUD word you never spoke, but you will speak
Four not exempt from pride some future day.
Resting on one white hand a warm wet cheek,
Over my open volume you will say,
'This man loved *me*!' then rise and trip away.'

DIRCE

STAND close around, ye Stygian set,
 With Dirce in one boat conveyed!
 Or Charon, seeing, may forget
 That he is old and she a shade.

MOTHER, I CANNOT MIND MY WHEEL

MOTHER, I cannot mind my wheel;
 My fingers ache, my lips are dry:
 Oh! if you felt the pain I feel!
 But O, who ever felt as I!
 No longer could I doubt him true,
 All other men may use deceit;
 He always said my eyes were blue,
 And often swore my lips were sweet.

DEATH STANDS ABOVE ME

DEATH stands above me, whispering low
 I know not what into my ear;
 Of his strange language all I know
 Is, there is not a word of fear.

JAMES SMITH

1775-1839

FROM 'REJECTED ADDRESSES'

THE BABY'S DEBUT

BY W. W.¹

[SPOKEN IN THE CHARACTER OF NANCY LAKE, A GIRL EIGHT YEARS OF AGE, WHO IS DRAWN UPON THE STAGE IN A CHILD'S CHAISE BY SAMUEL HUGHES, HER UNCLE'S PORTER]

My brother Jack was nine in May,
 And I was eight on New Year's day;
 So in Kate Wilson's shop

¹ William Wordsworth.

Papa (he's my papa and Jack's)
Bought me, last week, a doll of wax,
And brother Jack a top.

Jack's in the pouts, and this it is,—
He thinks mine came to more than his;
So to my drawer he goes,
Takes out the doll, and, O, my stars!
He pokes her head between the bars,
And melts off half her nose!

Quite cross, a bit of string I beg,
And tie it to his peg-top's peg,
And bang, with might and main,
Its head against the parlour-door;
Off flies the head, and hits the floor,
And breaks a window-pane.

This made him cry with rage and spite:
Well, let him cry, it serves him right.
A pretty thing, forsooth!
If he's to melt, all scalding hot,
Half my doll's nose, and I am not
To draw his peg-top's tooth!

Aunt Hannah heard the window break,
And cried, 'O naughty Nancy Lake,
Thus to distress your aunt:
No Drury Lane for you to-day!'
And while papa said, 'Pooh, she may!'
Mamma said, 'No, she shan't!'

Well, after many a sad reproach,
'They got into a hackney coach,
And trotted down the street.

I saw them go: one horse was blind,
The tails of both hung down behind,
Their shoes were on their feet.

The chaise in which poor brother Bill
Used to be drawn to Pentonville,
Stood in the lumber-room:
I wiped the dust from off the top,
While Molly mopped it with a mop,
And brushed it with a broom.

My uncle's porter, Samuel Hughes,
Came in at six to black the shoes,
(I always talk to Sam:)
So what does he, but takes, and drags
Me in the chaise along the flags,
And leaves me where I am.

My father's walls are made of brick,
But not so tall and not so thick
As these; and, goodness me!
My father's beams are made of wood,
But never, never half so good
As those that now I see.

What a large floor! 'tis like a town!
The carpet, when they lay it down,
Won't hide it, I'll be bound;
And there's a row of lamps!—my eye
How they do blaze! I wonder why
They keep them on the ground.

At first I caught hold of the wing,
And kept away; but Mr. Thing-
umbob, the prompter man,

Gave with his hand my chaise a shove,
 And said, 'Go on, my pretty love;
 Speak to 'em, little Nan.

'You've only got to curtsy, whisper,
 hold your chin up, laugh and lisp,
 And you are sure to take:
 I've known the day when brats, not quite
 Thirteen, got fifty pounds a-night;
 Then why not Nancy Lake?'

But while I'm speaking, where's papa?
 And where's my aunt? and where's mamma?
 Where's Jack? O, there they sit!
 They smile, they nod, I'll go my ways,
 And order round poor Billy's chaise,
 To join them in the pit.

And now, good gentlefolk, I go
 To join mamma, and see the show:
 So, bidding you adieu,
 I curtsy like a pretty miss,
 And if you'll blow to me a kiss,
 I'll blow a kiss to you.

PLAYHOUSE MUSINGS

BY S. T. C.¹

*Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
 Credebat libris; neque si male cesserat, usquam
 Decurrens alio, neque si bene.*

HORACE.

My pensive Public, wherefore look you sad?
 I had a grandmother, she kept a donkey
 To carry to the mart her crockery ware,
 And when that donkey looked me in the face,
 His face was sad! and you are sad, My Public!

¹ Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Joy should be yours: this tenth day of October
Again assembles us in Drury Lane.
Long wept my eye to see the timber planks
That hid our ruins; many a day I cried,
Ah me! I fear they never will rebuild it!
Till on one eve, one joyful Monday eve,
As along Charles Street I prepared to walk,
Just at the corner, by the pastrycook's,
I heard a trowel tick against a brick.
I looked me up, and straight a parapet
Uprose at least seven inches o'er the planks.
Joy to thee, Drury! to myself I said:
He of Blackfriars' Road, who hymned thy downfall
In loud Hosannahs, and who prophesied
That flames, like those from prostrate Solyma,
Would scorch the hand that ventured to rebuild thee,
Has proved a lying prophet. From that hour,
As leisure offered, close to Mr. Spring's
Box-office door, I've stood and eyed the builders.
They had a plan to render less their labours;
Workmen in olden times would mount a ladder
With hodded heads, but these stretched forth a pole
From the wall's pinnacle, they placed a pulley
Athwart the pole, a rope athwart the pulley;
To this a basket dangled; mortar and bricks
Thus freighted, swung securely to the top,
And in the empty basket workmen twain
Precipitate, unhurt, accosted earth.

Oh! 'twas a goodly sound, to hear the people
Who watched the work, express their various
thoughts!
While some believed it never would be finished,
Some, on the contrary, believed it would.

I've heard our front that faces Drury Lane
Much criticized; they say 'tis vulgar brick-work,
A mimic manufactory of floor-cloth.
One of the morning papers wished that front
Cemented like the front in Brydges Street;
As it now looks, they call it Wyatt's Mermaid,
A handsome woman with a fish's tail.

White is the steeple of St. Bride's in Fleet Street;
The Albion (as its name denotes) is white;
Morgan and Saunders' shop for chairs and tables
Gleams like a snow-ball in the setting sun;
White is Whitehall. But not St. Bride's in Fleet
Street,
The spotless Albion, Morgan, no, nor Saunders,
Nor white Whitehall, is white as Drury's face.

Oh, Mr. Whitbread! fie upon you, sir!
I think you should have built a colonnade;
When tender Beauty, looking for her coach,
Protrudes her gloveless hand, perceives the shower,
And draws the tippet closer round her throat,
Perchance her coach stands half a dozen off,
And, ere she mounts the step, the oozing mud
Soaks through her pale kid slipper. On the morrow,
She coughs at breakfast, and her gruff papa
Cries, 'There you go! this comes of playhouses!'
To build no portico is penny wise:
Heaven grant it prove not in the end pound foolish!

Hail to thee, Drury! Queen of Theatres!
What is the Regency in Tottenham Street,
The Royal Amphitheatre of Arts,
Astley's, Olympic, or the Sans Pareil,
Compared with thee? Yet when I view thee pushed

Back from the narrow street that christened thee,
I know not why they call thee Drury Lane.

Amid the freaks that modern fashion sanctions,
It grieves me much to see live animals
Brought on the stage. Grimaldi has his rabbit,
Laurent his cat, and Bradbury his pig;
Fie on such tricks! Johnson, the machinist
Of former Drury, imitated life
Quite to the life. The elephant in Blue Beard,
Stuffed by his hand, wound round his lithe proboscis,

As spruce as he who roared in Padmanaba.
Nought born on earth should die. On hackney
stands

I reverence the coachman who cries 'Gee',
And spares the lash. When I behold a spider
Prey on a fly, a magpie on a worm,
Or view a butcher with horn-handled knife
Slaughter a tender lamb as dead as mutton,
Indeed, indeed, I'm very, very, sick!

HORACE SMITH

1779-1849

THE LIVING LUSTRES

BY T. M.¹

*Iam te iuvaverit
Viros relinquere,
Doctaeque coniugis
Sinu quiescere.*

SIR T. MORE.

O WHY should our dull retrospective addresses
Fall damp as wet blankets on Drury Lane fire?
Away with blue devils, away with distresses,
And give the gay spirit to sparkling desire!

¹ Thomas Moore.

Let artists decide on the beauties of Drury,
The richest to me is when woman is there;
The question of houses I leave to the jury;
The fairest to me is the house of the fair.

When woman's soft smile all our senses bewilders,
And gilds, while it carves, her dear form on the
heart,

What need has New Drury of carvers and gilders?
With Nature so bounteous, why call upon Art?

How well would our actors attend to their duties,
Our house save in oil, and our authors in wit,
In lieu of yon lamps, if a row of young beauties
Glanced light from their eyes between us and the
pit!

The apples that grew on the fruit-tree of knowledge
By woman were plucked, and she still wears the
prize,

To tempt us in theatre, senate, or college—
I mean the love-apples that bloom in the eyes.

There too is the lash which, all statutes controlling,
Still governs the slaves that are made by the fair;
For man is the pupil, who, while her eye's rolling,
Is lifted to rapture, or sunk in despair.

Bloom, Theatre, bloom, in the roseate blushes
Of beauty illumed by a love-breathing smile!
And flourish, ye pillars, as green as the rushes
That pillow the nymphs of the Emerald Isle!

For dear is the Emerald Isle of the ocean,
Whose daughters are fair as the foam of the wave,
Whose sons, unaccustomed to rebel commotion,
Though joyous, are sober—though peaceful, are
brave.

The shamrock their olive, sworn foe to a quarrel,
Protects from the thunder and lightning of rows;
Their sprig of shillelagh is nothing but laurel,
Which flourishes rapidly over their brows.

O! soon shall they burst the tyrannical shackles
Which each panting bosom indignantly names,
Until not one goose at the capital cackles
Against the grand question of Catholic claims.

And then shall each Paddy, who once on the Liffey
Perchance held the helm of some mackerel-hoy,
Hold the helm of the state, and dispense in a jiffy
More fishes than ever he caught when a boy.

And those who now quit their hods, shovels, and
barrows,

In crowds to the bar of some ale-house to flock,
When bred to *our* bar shall be Gibbises and Garrows,
Assume the silk gown, and discard the smock-
frock.

For Erin surpasses the daughters of Neptune,
As Dian outshines each encircling star;
And the spheres and the heavens could never have
kept tune
Till set to the music of Erin-go-bragh!

THOMAS CAMPBELL

1777-1844

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

YE Mariners of England
That guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze,

Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe:
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave.
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below—
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow

To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

HOHENLINDEN

ON Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed
Each horseman drew his battle blade
And furious every charger neighed
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed, to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of Heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich, all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part, where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

OF Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between:

‘Hearts of oak!’ our captains cried, when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
As he hailed them o’er the wave:
‘Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save:—
So peace instead of death let us bring:
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England’s feet,
And make submission meet
To our King.’ . . .

Now joy, old England, raise!
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities’ blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light!
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A CHIEFTAIN to the Highlands bound
Cries 'Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry!'

'Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle
This dark and stormy water?'
'O I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this, Lord Ullin's daughter.

'And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

'His horsemen hard behind us ride—
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?'

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
'I'll go, my chief, I'm ready:
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady:—

'And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white
I'll row you o'er the ferry.'

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode arméd men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

‘O haste thee, haste!’ the lady cries,
‘Though tempests round us gather;
I’ll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father.’

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, oh! too strong for human hand
The tempest gathered o’er her.

And still they rowed amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore,—
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For, sore dismayed, through storm and shade
His child he did discover:—
One lovely hand she stretched for aid,
And one was round her lover.

‘Come back! come back!’ he cried in grief,
‘Across this stormy water:
And I’ll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—O my daughter!’

’Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore,
Return or aid preventing:
The waters wild went o’er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

OUR bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had lowered,

And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground over-
powered

The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw;
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array
Far, far I had roamed on a desolate track:
'Twas autumn,—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was
young;

I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers
sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to
part;

My little ones kissed me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobbed aloud in her fullness of heart.

'Stay—stay with us!—rest!—thou art weary and
worn!'—

And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;—
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

THE LAST MAN

ALL worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,
The Sun himself must die,
Before this mortal shall assume
Its Immortality!

I saw a vision in my sleep
That gave my spirit strength to sweep
Adown the gulf of Time!

I saw the last of human mould
That shall Creation's death behold.
As Adam saw her prime!

The Sun's eye had a sickly glare,
The Earth with age was wan,
The skeletons of nations were
Around that lonely man!
Some had expired in fight,—the brands
Still rusted in their bony hands;
In plague and famine some!
Earth's cities had no sound nor tread;
And ships were drifting with the dead
To shores where all was dumb!

Yet, prophet-like, that lone one stood
With dauntless words and high,
That shook the sere leaves from the wood
As if a storm passed by,
Saying, 'We are twins in death, proud Sun!
Thy face is cold, thy race is run,
'Tis Mercy bids thee go;
For thou ten thousand thousand years
Hast seen the tide of human tears,
That shall no longer flow.

‘What though beneath thee man put forth
His pomp, his pride, his skill,
And arts that made fire, flood, and earth
The vassals of his will;—
Yet mourn I not thy parted sway,
Thou dim discrownèd king of day:
For all those trophied arts
And triumphs that beneath thee sprang
Healed not a passion or a pang
Entailed on human hearts.

‘Go, let oblivion’s curtain fall
Upon the stage of men,
Nor with thy rising beams recall
Life’s tragedy again.
Its piteous pageants bring not back,
Nor waken flesh upon the rack
Of pain anew to writhe—
Stretched in disease’s shapes abhorred,
Or mown in battle by the sword
Like grass beneath the scythe.

‘Even I am weary in yon skies
To watch thy fading fire;
Test of all sumless agonies,
Behold not me expire!
My lips that speak thy dirge of death—
Their rounded gasp and gurgling breath
To see thou shalt not boast;
The eclipse of Nature spreads my pall,—
The majesty of Darkness shall
Receive my parting ghost!

‘This spirit shall return to Him
That gave its heavenly spark;

Yet think not, Sun, it shall be dim
When thou thyself art dark!
No! it shall live again, and shine
In bliss unknown to beams of thine,
By Him recalled to breath
Who captive led captivity,
Who robbed the grave of Victory,
And took the sting from Death!

'Go, Sun, while Mercy holds me up
On Nature's awful waste
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of grief that man shall taste—
Go, tell the night that hides thy face
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race
On Earth's sepulchral clod
The darkening universe defy
To quench his immortality
Or shake his trust in God!'

LOCHIEL'S WARNING

WIZARD—LOCHIEL

WIZARD

LOCHIEL, Lochiel! beware of the day
When the Lowlands shall meet thee in battle array!
For a field of the dead rushes red on my sight,
And the clans of Culloden are scattered in fight.
They rally, they bleed for their kingdom and crown;
Woe, woe to the riders that trample them down!
Proud Cumberland prances, insulting the slain,
And their hoof-beaten bosoms are trod to the plain.
But hark! through the fast-flashing lightning of war
What steed to the desert flies frantic and far?

'Tis thine, oh Glenullin! whose bride shall await,
Like a love-lighted watch-fire, all night at the gate.
A steed comes at morning: no rider is there;
But its bridle is red with the sign of despair.
Weep, Albin! to death and captivity led!
Oh, weep! but thy tears cannot number the dead;
For a merciless sword on Culloden shall wave,
Culloden! that reeks with the blood of the brave.

LOCHIEL

Go, preach to the coward, thou death-telling seer!
Or, if gory Culloden so dreadful appear,
Draw, dotard, around thy old wavering sight
This mantle to cover the phantoms of fright.

WIZARD

Ha! laugh'st thou, Lochiel, my vision to scorn?
Proud bird of the mountain, thy plume shall be
torn!
Say, rushed the bold eagle exultingly forth
From his home in the dark-rolling clouds of the
north?
Lo! the death-shot of foemen outspeeding, he rode
Companionless, bearing destruction abroad;
But down let him stoop from his havoc on high!
Ah! home let him speed,—for the spoiler is nigh!
Why flames the far summit? Why shoot to the
blast
Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast?
'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven
From his eyrie, that beacons the darkness of heaven!
Oh, crested Lochiel! the peerless in might,
Whose banners arise on the battlements' height,
Heaven's fire is around thee to blast and to burn;
Return to thy dwelling! all lonely return!

For the blackness of ashes shall mark where it stood,
And a wild mother scream o'er her famishing brood.

LOCHIEL

False Wizard, avaunt! I have marshalled my clan—
Their swords are a thousand, their bosoms are one!
They are true to the last of their blood and their
breath,

And like reapers descend to the harvest of death.
Then welcome be Cumberland's steed to the shock!
Let him dash his proud foam like a wave on the
rock!

But woe to his kindred, and woe to his cause,
When Albin her claymore indignantly draws!
When her bonneted chieftains to victory crowd,
Clanronald the dauntless and Moray the proud,
All plaided and plumed in their tartan array——

WIZARD .

Lochiel, Lochiel! beware of the day;
For, dark and despairing, my sight I may seal,
But man cannot cover what God would reveal.
'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.
I tell thee Culloden's dread echoes shall ring
With the bloodhounds that bark for thy fugitive
king.

Lo! anointed by Heaven with the vials of wrath,
Behold where he flies on his desolate path!
Now, in darkness and billows, he sweeps from my
sight:

Rise, rise! ye wild tempests, and cover his flight!
'Tis finished. Their thunders are hushed on the
moors:

Culloden is lost, and my country deplores.

But where is the iron-bound prisoner? Where?
For the red eye of battle is shut in despair.
Say, mounts he the ocean-wave, banished, forlorn,
Like a limb from his country cast bleeding and torn?
Ah no! for a darker departure is near;
The war-drum is muffled, and black is the bier;
His death-bell is tolling: oh! mercy dispel
Yon sight that it freezes my spirit to tell!

LOCHIEL

Down, soothless insulter! I trust not the tale:
For never shall Albin a destiny meet
So black with dishonour, so foul with retreat.
Though my perishing ranks should be strewed in
 their gore,
Like ocean-weeds heaped on the surf-beaten shore,
Lochiel, untainted by flight or by chains,
While the kindling of life in his bosom remains
Shall victor exult, or in death be laid low
With his back to the field, and his feet to the foe!
And, leaving in battle no blot on his name,
Look proudly to Heaven from the death-bed of
 fame.

ODE TO WINTER

Germany, December 1800

WHEN first the fiery-mantled Sun
His heavenly race began to run,
Round the earth and ocean blue
His children four the Seasons flew:—
 First, in green apparel dancing,
The young Spring smiled with angel-grace;
 Rosy Summer, next advancing,
Rushed into her sire's embrace—

Her bright-haired sire, who bade her keep
For ever nearest to his smiles.
On Calpe's olive-shaded steep
Or India's citron-covered isles.
More remote, and buxom-brown,
The Queen of vintage bowed before his throne;
A rich pomegranate gemmed her crown,
A ripe sheaf bound her zone.

But howling Winter fled afar
To hills that prop the polar star;
And loves on deer-borne car to ride
With barren darkness at his side,
Round the shore where loud Lofoden
Whirls to death the roaring whale,
Round the hall where Runic Odin
Howls his war-song to the gale—
Save when adown the ravaged globe
He travels on his native storm,
Deflowering Nature's grassy robe
And trampling on her faded form;
Till light's returning lord assume
The shaft that drives him to his polar field,
Of power to pierce his raven plume
And crystal-covered shield.

O sire of storms! whose savage ear
The Lapland drum delights to hear,
When Frenzy with her bloodshot eye
Implores thy dreadful deity—
Archangel! power of desolation!
Fast descending as thou art,
Say, hath mortal invocation
Spells to touch thy stony heart?

Then, sullen Winter! hear my prayer
And gently rule the ruined year;
Nor chill the wanderer's bosom bare,
Nor freeze the wretch's falling tear:
To shuddering Want's unmantled bed
Thy horror-breathing agues cease to lend,
And gently on the orphan head
Of innocence descend.

But chiefly spare, O king of clouds!
The sailor on his airy shrouds,
When wrecks and beacons strew the steep
And spectres walk along the deep.
Milder yet thy snowy breezes
Pour on yonder tented shores,
Where the Rhine's broad billow freezes,
Or the dark-brown Danube roars.
O winds of Winter! list ye there
To many a deep and dying groan?
Or start, ye demons of the midnight air,
At shrieks and thunders louder than your own?
Alas! e'en your unhallowed breath
May spare the victim fallen low;
But man will ask no truce to death,
No bounds to human woe.

MEN OF ENGLAND

MEN of England! who inherit
Rights that cost your sires their blood!
Men whose undegenerate spirit
Has been proved on land and flood;
By the foes ye've fought, uncounted,
By the glorious deeds ye've done.
Trophies captured—breaches mounted,
Navies conquered—kingdoms won!

Yet remember, England gathers
Hence but fruitless wreaths of fame,
If the freedom of your fathers
Glow not in your heart the same.

What are monuments of bravery,
Where no public virtues bloom?
What avail in lands of slavery
Trophied temples, arch, and tomb?

Pageants!—Let the world revere us
For our people's rights and laws,
And the breasts of civic heroes
Bared in Freedom's holy cause.

Yours are Hampden's, Russell's glory,
Sidney's matchless shade is yours,—
Martyrs in heroic story,
Worth a thousand Agincourts!

We're the sons of sires that baffled
Crowned and mitred tyranny;—
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birthright—so will we!

TO THE EVENING STAR

STAR that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary labourer free!
If any star shed peace, 'tis thou,
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as hers we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,

Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard,
And songs when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirred
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

THOMAS MOORE

1779-1852

THE MINSTREL BOY

THE Minstrel Boy to the war is gone,
In the ranks of death you'll find him;
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him.—
'Land of song!' said the warrior-bard,
'Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
One faithful harp shall praise thee!'

The Minstrel fell!—but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under;
The harp he loved ne'er spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder;
And said, 'No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery!
Thy songs were made for the pure and free,
They shall never sound in slavery.'

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

OFF, in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me;
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain hath bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends, so linked together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather;
I feel like one,
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND

SHE is far from the land where her young hero
sleeps,

And lovers are round her, sighing:
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild song of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking;—
Ah! little they think who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the Minstrel is breaking.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,
They were all that to life had entwined him;
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the
West,
From her own loved island of sorrow.

CANADIAN BOAT SONG

WRITTEN ON THE RIVER ST. LAWRENCE

Et remigem cantus hortatur.—QUINTILIAN.

FAINTLY as tolls the evening chime
Our voices keep tune and our oars keep time.
Soon as the woods on shore look dim,
We'll sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn.
Row, brothers, row, the stream runs fast,
The Rapids are near and the daylight's past.

Why should we yet our sail unfurl?
There is not a breath the blue wave to curl;
But, when the wind blows off the shore,
Oh! sweetly we'll rest our weary oar.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The Rapids are near and the daylight's past.

Ottawa's tide! this trembling moon
Shall see us float over thy surges soon.
Saint of this green isle! hear our prayers,
Oh, grant us cool heavens and favouring airs.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The Rapids are near and the daylight's past.

BEFORE THE BATTLE

By the hope within us springing,
Herald of to-morrow's strife;
By that sun, whose light is bringing
Chains or freedom, death or life—
Oh! remember life can be
No charm for him, who lives not free!
Like the day-star in the wave,
Sinks a hero in his grave,
Midst the dew-fall of a nation's tears.

Happy is he o'er whose decline
The smiles of home may soothing shine,
And light him down the steep of years:
But oh, how blest they sink to rest,
Who close their eyes on Victory's breast!

O'er his watch-fire's fading embers
Now the foeman's cheek turns white,
When his heart that field remembers,
Where we tamed his tyrant might.

Never let him bind again
A chain, like that we broke from then.
Hark! the horn of combat calls—
Ere the golden evening falls,
May we pledge that horn in triumph round!

Many a heart that now beats high,
In slumber cold at night shall lie,
Nor waken even at victory's sound:—
But oh, how blest that hero's sleep,
O'er whom a wond'ring world shall weep!

THE YOUNG MAY MOON

THE young May moon is beaming, love,
The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love;
How sweet to rove
Through Morna's grove,
When the drowsy world is dreaming, love!
Then awake!—the heavens look bright, my dear,
'Tis never too late for delight, my dear;
And the best of all ways
To lengthen our days
Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear!

Now all the world is sleeping, love,
But the Sage, his star-watch keeping, love,
And I, whose star
More glorious far
Is the eye from that casement peeping, love.
Then awake!—till rise of sun, my dear,
The Sage's glass we'll shun, my dear,
Or in watching the flight
Of bodies of light
He might happen to take thee for one, my dear!

THE HARP THAT ONCE THROUGH
TARA'S HALLS

THE harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts, that once beat high for praise,
Now feel that pulse no more.

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells:
The chord alone, that breaks at night,
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives,
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that still she lives.

THE IRISH PEASANT TO HIS MISTRESS

THROUGH grief and through danger thy smile hath
cheered my way,
Till hope seemed to bud from each thorn that round
me lay;
The darker our fortune, the brighter our pure love
burned,
Till shame into glory, till fear into zeal was turned:
Yes, slave as I was, in thy arms my spirit felt
free,
And blessed even the sorrows that made me more
dear to thee.

Thy rival was honoured, while thou wert wronged
and scorned;

Thy crown was of briers, while gold her brows
adorned;

She wooed me to temples, whilst thou lay'st hid in
caves;

Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas! were
slaves;

Yet cold in the earth, at thy feet, I would rather be
Than wed what I loved not, or turn one thought
from thee.

They slander thee sorely, who say thy vows are
frail—

Hadst thou been a false one, thy cheek had looked
less pale!

They say, too, so long thou hast worn those linger-
ing chains,

That deep in thy heart they have printed their
servile stains:

O, foul is the slander!—no chain could that soul
subdue—

Where shineth thy spirit, there Liberty shineth too!

THE TIME I'VE LOST IN WOOING

THE time I've lost in wooing,

In watching and pursuing

The light that lies

In woman's eyes,

Has been my heart's undoing.

Though wisdom oft has sought me,

I scorned the lore she brought me,

My only books

Were woman's looks,

And folly's all they've taught me.

Her smile when Beauty granted,
I hung with gaze enchanted,
 Like him the Sprite,
 Whom maids by night
Oft meet in glen that's haunted.
Like him too Beauty won me,
But while her eyes were on me,
 If once their ray
 Was turned away
O! winds could not outrun me.

And are those follies going?
And is my proud heart growing
 Too cold or wise
 For brilliant eyes
Again to set it glowing?
No, vain, alas! th' endeavour
From bonds so sweet to sever;
 Poor wisdom's chance
 Against a glance
Is now as weak as ever.

AT THE MID HOUR OF NIGHT

At the mid hour of night, when stars are weeping,
 I fly
To the lone vale we loved, when life shone warm in
 thine eye;
And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the
 regions of air
To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt come
 to me there,
And tell me our love is remembered even in the
 sky.

Then I sing the wild song it once was rapture to hear,
When our voices commingling breathed like one on
the ear;

And as Echo far off through the vale my sad
orison rolls,

I think, O my love! 'tis thy voice from the King-
dom of Souls

Faintly answering still the notes that once were so
dear.

PRO PATRIA MORI

WHEN he who adores thee has left but the name
Of his fault and his sorrows behind,
O! say wilt thou weep, when they darken the fame
Of a life that for thee was resigned?

Yes, weep, and however my foes may condemn,
Thy tears shall efface their decree;

For, Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
I have been but too faithful to thee.

With thee were the dreams of my earliest love,
Every thought of my reason was thine:

In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above
Thy name shall be mingled with mine!

O! blest are the lovers and friends who shall live
The days of thy glory to see;

But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give
Is the pride of thus dying for thee.

ECHOES

How sweet the answer Echo makes
To Music at night,

When, roused by lute or horn, she wakes,
And far away o'er lawns and lakes

Goes answering light!

Yet Love hath echoes truer far
And far more sweet
Than e'er, beneath the moonlight's star,
Of horn or lute or soft guitar
The songs repeat.

'Tis when the sigh,—in youth sincere
And only then—
The sigh that's breathed for one to hear,
Is by that one, that only Dear
Breathed back again.

THE JOURNEY ONWARDS

As slow our ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still look'd back
To that dear isle 'twas leaving.
So loth we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts, as on we rove,
To those we've left behind us!

When, round the bowl, of vanished years
We talk with joyous seeming—
With smiles that might as well be tears,
So faint, so sad their beaming;
While memory brings us back again
Each early tie that twined us,
O, sweet 's the cup that circles then
To those we've left behind us!

And when in other climes we meet
Some isle or vale enchanting,
Where all looks flowery, wild, and sweet,
And nought but love is wanting;

We think how great had been our bliss
If Heaven had but assign'd us
To live and die in scenes like this,
With some we've left behind us!
As travellers oft look back at eve
When eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon that light they leave
Still faint behind them glowing,—
So, when the close of pleasure's day
To gloom hath near consign'd us,
We turn to catch one fading ray
Of joy that's left behind us.

BY THAT LAKE WHOSE GLOOMY SHORE¹

By that Lake, whose gloomy shore
Sky-lark never warbles o'er,
Where the cliff hangs high and steep
Young Saint Kevin stole to sleep.
'Here, at least,' he calmly said,
'Woman ne'er shall find my bed.'
Ah! the good Saint little knew
What that wily sex can do.
'Twas from Kathleen's eyes he flew,—
Eyes of most unholy blue!
She had loved him well and long,
Wished him hers, nor thought it wrong.
Wheresoe'er the Saint would fly,
Still he heard her light foot nigh;
East or west, where'er he turned,
Still her eyes before him burned.
On the bold cliff's bosom cast,
Tranquil now he sleeps at last;

¹ Founded upon a story told of St. Kevin.

Dreams of heaven, nor thinks that e'er
Woman's smile can haunt him there.
But nor earth nor heaven is free
From her power, if fond she be:
Even now, while calm he sleeps,
Kathleen o'er him leans and weeps.

Fearless she had tracked his feet
To this rocky, wild retreat;
And when morning met his view,
Her mild glances met it too.
Ah, your Saints have cruel hearts!
Sternly from his bed he starts,
And with rude repulsive shock,
Hurls her from the beetling rock.

Glendalough, thy gloomy wave
Soon was gentle Kathleen's grave!
Soon the saint (yet ah! too late,)
Felt her love, and mourned her fate.
When he said, 'Heaven rest her soul!'
Round the Lake light music stole;
And her ghost was seen to glide,
Smiling o'er the fatal tide.

THE FIRE WORSHIPPERS

'How sweetly,' said the trembling maid,
Of her own gentle voice afraid,
So long had they in silence stood,
Looking upon that tranquil flood—
'How sweetly does the moon-beam smile
To-night upon yon leafy isle!
Oft, in my fancy's wanderings,
I've wished that little isle had wings,

And we, within its fairy bowers,
Were wafted off to seas unknown,
Where not a pulse should beat but ours,
And we might live, love, die alone!
Far from the cruel and the cold,—
Where the bright eyes of angels only
Should come around us, to behold
A paradise so pure and lonely.
Would this be world enough for thee?—
Playful she turned, that he might see
The passing smile her cheek put on;
But when she marked how mournfully
His eyes met hers, that smile was gone;
And, bursting into heart-felt tears,
'Yes, yes,' she cried, 'my hourly fears,
My dreams have boded all too right—
We part—for ever part—to-night!
I knew, I knew it *could* not last—
'Twas bright, 'twas heavenly, but 'tis past!
Oh! ever thus, from childhood's hour,
I've seen my fondest hopes decay;
I never loved a tree or flower,
But 'twas the first to fade away.
I never nursed a dear gazelle,
To glad me with its soft black eye,
But when it came to know me well,
And love me, it was sure to die!
Now too—the joy most like divine
Of all I ever dreamt or knew,
To see thee, hear thee, call thee mine,—
Oh misery! must I lose *that* too?
Yet go—on peril's brink we meet;—
Those frightful rocks—that treacherous
sea—

No, never come again—though sweet,
Though heaven, it may be death to thee.
Farewell—and blessings on thy way,
Where'er thou goest, beloved stranger!
Better to sit and watch that ray,
And think thee safe, though far away,
Than have thee near me, and in danger!'

Lalla Rookh.

EDWARD THURLOW, LORD THURLOW

1781–1829

MAY

MAY! queen of blossoms,
And fulfilling flowers,
With what pretty music
Shall we charm the hours?
Wilt thou have pipe and reed,
Blown in the open mead?
Or to the lute give heed
In the green bowers?
Thou hast no need of us,
Or pipe or wire,
Thou hast the golden bee
Ripened with fire;
And many thousand more
Songsters, that thee adore,
Filling earth's grassy floor
With new desire.
Thou hast thy mighty herds,
Tame, and free livers;
Doubt not, thy music too
In the deep rivers;

And the whole plummy flight,
 Warbling the day and night:
 Up at the gates of light,
 See, the lark quivers!

When with the jacinth
 Coy fountains are tressed;
 And for the mournful bird
 Green woods are dressed,
 That did for Tereus pine;
 Then shall our songs be thine,
 To whom our hearts incline:
 MAY, be thou blessed.

EBENEZER ELLIOT

1781-1849

BATTLE SONG

DAY, like our souls, is fiercely dark;
 What then? 'Tis day!
 We sleep no more; the cock crows—hark!
 To arms! away!
 They come! they come! the knell is rung
 Of us or them;
 Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
 Of gold and gem.
 What collared hound of lawless sway,
 To famine dear—
 What pensioned slave of Attila,
 Leads in the rear?
 Come they from Scythian wilds afar,
 Our blood to spill?
 Wear they the livery of the Czar?
 They do his will.

Nor tasselled silk, nor epaulet,
Nor plume, nor torse—
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,
Our foot and horse.
But, dark and still, we inly glow,
Condensed in ire!
Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know
Our gloom is fire.
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,
Insults the land;
Wrongs, vengeance, and the Cause are ours,
And God's right hand!
Madmen! they trample into snakes
The wormy clod!
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes
The sword of God!
Behind, before, above, below,
They rouse the brave;
Where'er they go, they make a foe,
Or find a grave.

WHEN WILT THOU SAVE THE PEOPLE?

WHEN wilt thou save the people?

O God of mercy, when?

The people, Lord, the people,

Not thrones and crowns, but men!

Flowers of thy heart, O God, are they;

Let them not pass, like weeds, away—

Their heritage a sunless day.

God save the people!

Shall crime bring crime for ever,

Strength aiding still the strong?

Is it thy will, O Father,

That man shall toil for wrong?

'No,' say thy mountains; 'No,' thy skies;
Man's clouded sun shall brightly rise,
And songs be heard instead of sighs.
God save the people!

When wilt thou save the people?
O God of mercy, when?
The people, Lord, the people,
Not thrones and crowns, but men!
God save the people; thine they are,
Thy children, as thy Angels fair;
From vice, oppression, and despair,
God save the people!

SPRING

AGAIN the violet of our early days
Drinks beauteous azure from the golden sun,
And kindles into fragrance at his blaze;
The streams, rejoiced that winter's work is done,
Talk of to-morrow's cowslips, as they run.
Wild apple, thou art bursting into bloom!
Thy leaves are coming, snowy-blossomed thorn!
Wake, buried lily! spirit, quit thy tomb;
And thou, shade-loving hyacinth, be born!
Then, haste, sweet rose! sweet woodbine, hymn the
morn,
Whose dew-drops shall illume with pearly light
Each grassy blade that thick embattled stands
From sea to sea, while daisies infinite
Uplift in praise their little glowing hands,
O'er every hill that under heaven expands.

ANN TAYLOR

1782-1866

MEDDLESOME MATTY

O how one ugly trick has spoiled
The sweetest and the best!
Matilda, though a pleasant child,
One ugly trick possessed,
Which like a cloud before the skies
Hid all her better qualities.
Sometimes she'd lift the teapot lid,
To peep at what was in it,
Or tilt the kettle, if you did
But turn your back a minute;
In vain you told her not to touch,
Her trick of meddling grew so much.
Her Grandmamma went out one day,
And by mistake she laid
Her spectacles and snuff-box gay
Too near the little maid.
'Ah! well,' thought she, 'I'll try them on,
As soon as Grandmamma is gone.'
Forthwith she placed upon her nose
The glasses large and wide;
And looking round, as I suppose,
The snuff-box too she spied.
'O what a pretty box is this!
I'll open it,' said little Miss.
'I know that Grandmamma would say
"Don't meddle with it, dear";
But then she's far enough away,
And no one else is near;
Beside, what can there be amiss
In opening such a box as this?'

So thumb and finger went to work
To move the stubborn lid,
And presently a mighty jerk
The mighty mischief did;
For all at once, ah, woeful case!
The snuff came puffing in her face.

Poor eyes, poor nose, poor mouth and chin
A dismal sight presented;
And as the snuff got further in,
Sincerely she repented;
In vain she ran about for ease,
She could do nothing else but sneeze.

She dashed the spectacles away,
To wipe her tingling eyes,
And as in twenty bits they lay,
Her Grandmamma she spies;—
'Heyday! and what's the matter now?'
Cried Grandmamma, with lifted brow.

Matilda, smarting with the pain,
And tingling still and sore,
Made many a promise to refrain
From ever meddling more;
And 'tis a fact, as I have heard,
She ever since has kept her word.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

1784-1842

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;

And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

THE SPRING OF THE YEAR

GONE were but the winter cold,
And gone were but the snow,
I could sleep in the wild woods
Where primroses blow.

Cold 's the snow at my head,
And cold at my feet;
And the finger of death's at my e'en,
Closing them to sleep.

Let none tell my father
Or my mother so dear,—
I'll meet them both in heaven
At the spring of the year.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT

1784-1859

ABOU BEN ADHEM

ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
‘What writest thou?’—The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, ‘The names of those that love the Lord.’
‘And is mine one?’ said Abou. ‘Nay, not so,’
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, ‘I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow men.’

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had
blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

JENNY KISSED ME

JENNY kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in!

Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kissed me.

THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;—
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;—
O sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are
strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song—
Indoors and out,—summer and winter,—Mirth.

THE RIVER NILE

It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave mighty thought threading a
dream,
And times and things, as in that vision, seem
Keeping along it their eternal stands,—
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory
extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great
hands.

Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng,

And the void weighs on us; and then we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS

KING FRANCIS was a hearty king, and loved a royal
sport,

And one day as his lions fought, sat looking on the
court;

The nobles filled the benches, with the ladies in
their pride,

And 'mongst them sat the Count de Lorge, with one
for whom he sighed:

And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning
show,

Valour and love, and a king above, and the royal
beasts below.

Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing
jaws;

They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams, a
wind went with their paws;

With wallowing might and stifled roar they rolled
on one another,

Till all the pit, with sand and mane, was in a thun-
derous smother;

The bloody foam above the bars came whisking
through the air;

Said Francis then, 'Faith, gentlemen, we're better
here than there!'

De Lorge's love o'erheard the King, a beauteous,
lively dame,
With smiling lips, and sharp bright eyes, which
always seemed the same:
She thought, 'The Count, my lover, is brave as
brave can be;
He surely would do wondrous things to show his
love of me!
King, ladies, lovers, all look on; the occasion is
divine,
I'll drop my glove to prove his love; great glory will
be mine!'

She dropped her glove to prove his love: then looked
at him and smiled;
He bowed, and in a moment leaped among the lions
wild!
The leap was quick; return was quick; he has re-
gained his place;
Then threw the glove, but not with love, right in
the lady's face!
'By Heaven!' said Francis, 'rightly done!' and he
rose from where he sat:
'No love,' quoth he, 'but vanity, sets love a task
like that!'

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

1785-1866

THE GRAVE OF LOVE

I DUG, beneath the cypress shade,
What well might seem an elfin's grave;
And every pledge in earth I laid.
That erst thy false affection gave.

I pressed them down the sod beneath;
I placed one mossy stone above;
And twined the rose's fading wreath
Around the sepulchre of love.

Frail as thy love, the flowers were dead,
Ere yet the evening sun was set:
But years shall see the cypress spread,
Immutable as my regret.

FROM 'NIGHTMARE ABBEY'

THREE MEN OF GOTHAM

SEAMEN three! What men be ye?
Gotham's three wise men we be.
Whither in your bowl so free?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.
And your ballast is old wine.

Who art thou, so fast adrift?
I am he they call Old Care.
Here on board we will thee lift.
No: I may not enter there.
Wherefore so? 'Tis Jove's decree,
In a bowl Care may not be.
In a bowl Care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll?
No: in charmed bowl we swim.
What the charm that floats the bowl?
Water may not pass the brim.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.
And your ballast is old wine.

FROM 'MAID MARIAN'

(1) ROBIN HOOD AND THE GREY FRIARS

BOLD Robin has robed him in ghostly attire,
And forth he is gone like a holy friar,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And of two grey friars he soon was aware,
Regaling themselves with dainty fare,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

'Good morrow, good brothers,' said bold Robin
Hood,

'And what make you in the good greenwood,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!
Now give me, I pray you, wine and food;
For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.'

'Good brother,' they said, 'we would give you full
fain,

But we have no more than enough for twain,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down.'
'Then give me some money,' said bold Robin Hood,
'For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.'

'No money have we, good brother,' said they:
'Then,' said he, 'we three for money will pray:
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And whatever shall come at the end of our prayer,
We three holy friars will piously share,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.'

'We will not pray with thee, good brother. God
wot:
For truly, good brother, thou pleasest us not,

Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:’
Then up they both started from Robin to run,
But down on their knees Robin pulled them each
 one,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

The grey friars prayed with a doleful face,
But bold Robin prayed with a right merry grace,
 Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And when they had prayed, their portmanteau he
 took,
And from it a hundred good angels he shook,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

‘The saints,’ said bold Robin, ‘have hearkened our
 prayer,
And here’s a good angel apiece for your share:
If more you would have, you must win ere you
 wear:

Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:’
Then he blew his good horn with a musical cheer,
And fifty green bowmen came trooping full near,
And away the grey friars they bounded like deer,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

(2) OVER, OVER

A DAMSEL came in midnight rain,
And called across the ferry:
The weary wight she called in vain,
Whose senses sleep did bury.
At evening, from her father’s door
She turned to meet her lover:
At midnight, on the lonely shore,
She shouted, ‘Over, over!’

She had not met him by the tree
Of their accustomed meeting,
And sad and sick at heart was she,
Her heart all wildly beating.
In chill suspense the hours went by,
The wild storm burst above her:
She turned her to the river nigh,
And shouted, 'Over, over!'

A dim, discoloured, doubtful light
The moon's dark veil permitted,
And thick before her troubled sight
Fantastic shadows flitted.
Her lover's form appeared to glide,
And beckon o'er the water:
Alas! his blood that morn had dyed
Her brother's sword with slaughter.

Upon a little rock she stood,
To make her invocation:
She marked not that the rain-swoll'n flood
Was islanding her station.
The tempest mocked her feeble cry:
No saint his aid would give her:
The flood swelled high and yet more high,
And swept her down the river.

Yet oft beneath the pale moonlight,
When hollow winds are blowing,
The shadow of that maiden bright
Glides by the dark stream's flowing.
And when the storms of midnight rave,
While clouds the broad moon cover,
The wild gusts waft across the wave
The cry of, 'Over, over!'

FROM 'CROTCHET CASTLE'

THE PRIEST AND THE MULBERRY TREE

DID you hear of the curate who mounted his mare,
And merrily trotted along to the fair?
Of creature more tractable none ever heard,
In the height of her speed she would stop at a word;
And again with a word, when the curate said Hey,
She put forth her mettle, and galloped away.

As near to the gates of the city he rode,
While the sun of September all brilliantly glowed,
The good priest discovered, with eyes of desire,
A mulberry tree in a hedge of wild briar;
On boughs long and lofty, in many a green shoot,
Hung large, black, and glossy, the beautiful fruit.

The curate was hungry and thirsty to boot;
He shrunk from the thorns, though he longed for
the fruit;

With a word he arrested the courser's keen speed,
And he stood up erect on the back of his steed;
On the saddle he stood, while the creature stood
still,

And he gathered the fruit, till he took his good fill.

'Sure never,' he thought, 'was a creature so rare,
So docile, so true, as my excellent mare.
Lo, here, how I stand' (and he gazed all around),
'As safe and as steady as if on the ground,
Yet how had it been, if some traveller this way,
Had, dreaming no mischief, but chanced to cry
Hey?'

He stood with his head in the mulberry tree,
And he spoke out aloud in his fond reverie:

At the sound of the word, the good mare made a
push,
And down went the priest in the wild-briar bush.
He remembered too late, on his thorny green bed,
Much that well may be thought, cannot wisely be
said.

FROM 'MELINCOURT'

THE FLOWER OF LOVE

'Tis said the rose is Love's own flower,
Its blush so bright, its thorns so many;
And winter on its bloom has power,
But has not on its sweetness any.
For though young Love's ethereal rose
Will droop on Age's wintry bosom,
Yet still its faded leaves disclose
The fragrance of their earliest blossom.

But ah! the fragrance lingering there
Is like the sweets that mournful duty
Bestows with sadly-soothing care,
To deck the grave of bloom and beauty.
For when its leaves are shrunk and dry,
Its blush extinct, to kindle never,
The fragrance is but Memory's sigh,
That breathes of pleasures past for ever.

Why did not Love the amaranth choose,
That bears no thorns, and cannot perish?
Alas! no sweets its flowers diffuse,
And only sweets Love's life can cherish.
But be the rose and amaranth twined,
And Love, their mingled powers assuming,
Shall round his brows a chaplet bind,
For ever sweet, for ever blooming.

FROM 'GRYLL GRANGE'

LOVE AND AGE

I PLAYED with you 'mid cowslips blowing,
When I was six and you were four ;
When garlands weaving, flower-balls throwing,
Were pleasures soon to please no more.
Through groves and meads, o'er grass and heather,
With little playmates, to and fro,
We wandered hand in hand together ;
But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,
And still our early love was strong ;
Still with no care our days were laden,
They glided joyously along ;
And I did love you very dearly,
How dearly words want power to show ;
I thought your heart was touched as nearly ;
But that was fifty years ago.

Then other lovers came around you,
Your beauty grew from year to year,
And many a splendid circle found you
The centre of its glittering sphere.
I saw you then, first vows forsaking,
On rank and wealth your hand bestow ;
Oh, then I thought my heart was breaking,—
But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another :
No cause she gave me to repine ;
And when I heard you were a mother,
I did not wish the children mine.

My own young flock, in fair progression,
Made up a pleasant Christmas row:
My joy in them was past expression;—
But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,
You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze;
My earthly lot was far more homely;
But I too had my festal days.
No merrier eyes have ever glistened
Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,
Than when my youngest child was christened,—
But that was twenty years ago.

Time passed. My eldest girl was married,
And I am now a grandsire grey;
One pet of four years old I've carried
Among the wild-flowered meads to play.
In our old fields of childish pleasure,
Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,
She fills her basket's ample measure;—
And that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassioned blindness
Has passed away in colder light,
I still have thought of you with kindness,
And shall do, till our last good-night.
The ever-rolling silent hours
Will bring a time we shall not know,
When our young days of gathering flowers
Will be an hundred years ago.

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER
(‘BARRY CORNWALL’)

1787-1874

THE LEVELLER

THE king he reigns on a throne of gold,
Fenced round by his ‘right divine’;
The baron he sits in his castle old,
Drinking his ripe red wine:
But below, below, in his ragged coat,
The beggar he tuneth a hungry note,
And the spinner is bound to his weary thread,
And the debtor lies down with an aching head.

*So the world goes !
So the stream flows !
Yet there is a fellow, whom nobody knows,
Who maketh all free
On land and sea,
And forceth the rich like the poor to flee !*

The lady lies down in her warm white lawn,
And dreams of her pearléd pride;
The milkmaid sings, to the wild-eyed dawn,
Sad songs on the cold hill-side:
And the bishop smiles, as on high he sits,
On the scholar who writes and starves by fits;
And the girl who her nightly needle plies,
Looks out for the summer of life,—and dies!

*So the world goes !
So the stream flows !
Yet there is a fellow, whom nobody knows,
Who maketh all free
On land and sea,
And forceth the rich like the poor to flee !*

GEORGE GORDON BYRON, LORD BYRON

1788-1824

WHEN WE TWO PARTED

WHEN we two parted
 In silence and tears,
 Half broken-hearted
 To sever for years,
 Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
 Colder thy kiss;
 Truly that hour foretold
 Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
 Sunk chill on my brow—
 It felt like the warning
 Of what I feel now.
 Thy vows are all broken,
 And light is thy fame:
 I hear thy name spoken,
 And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
 A knell to mine ear;
 A shudder comes o'er me—
 Why wert thou so dear?
 They know not I knew thee,
 Who knew thee too well:—
 Long, long shall I rue thee,
 Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
 In silence I grieve,
 That thy heart could forget,
 Thy spirit deceive.

If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

1808.

AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR

'Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui
meminisse!'

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon returned to Earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,

Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow:
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
Nor need I to repine,
That all those charms have passed away;
I might have watched through long decay.

The flower in ripened bloom unmatched
Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatched,
The leaves must drop away:
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it plucked to-day;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade;
The night that followed such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath passed,
And thou wert lovely to the last;
Extinguished, not decayed;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
 My tears might well be shed,
 To think I was not near to keep
 One vigil o'er thy bed;
 To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
 To fold thee in a faint embrace,
 Uphold thy drooping head;
 And show that love, however vain,
 Nor thou nor I can feel again.
 Yet how much less it were to gain,
 Though thou hast left me free,
 The loveliest things that still remain,
 Than thus remember thee!
 The all of thine that cannot die
 Through dark and dread Eternity
 Returns again to me,
 And more thy buried love endears
 Than aught except its living years. 1812.

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

'Expende Annibalem:—quot libras in duce summo In-
 venies?'—Juvenal, *Sat.* x.

'The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the Senate, by the Italians, and by the Provincials of Gaul; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity. . . . By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till ——.'—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi, p. 220.

I

'Tis done—but yesterday a King!
 And armed with Kings to strive—
 And now thou art a nameless thing:
 So abject—yet alive!

Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strewed our earth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

II

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bowed so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestioned,—power to save,—
Thine only gift hath been the grave,
To those that worshipped thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

III

Thanks for that lesson—It will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preached before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

IV

The triumph and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife—
The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;

The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seemed made but to obey,
 Wherewith renown was rife—
All quelled!—Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

V

The Desolator desolate!
 The Victor overthrown!
The Arbiter of others' fate
 A Suppliant for his own!
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope?
 Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince—or live a slave—
Thy choice is most ignobly brave.

VI

He who of old would rend the oak,
 Dreamed not of the rebound:
Chained by the trunk he vainly broke—
 Alone—how looked he round?
Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,
An equal deed hast done at length,
 And darker fate hast found:
He fell, the forest prowlers' prey;
But thou must eat thy heart away!

VII

The Roman, when his burning heart
 Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
 In savage grandeur, home—

He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandoned power.

VIII

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway
Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well:
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

IX

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung—
Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean;

X

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bowed the trembling limb,
And thanked him for a throne!

Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

XI

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain:
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

XII

Weighed in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality! are just
To all that pass away;
But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay:
Nor deemed Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

XIII

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?

Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,—
'Tis worth thy vanished diadem!

XIV

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile—
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all idle hand
In loitering mood upon the sand
That Earth is now as free!
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
Transferred his by-word to thy brow.

XV

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prisoned rage?
But one—'The world *was* mine!'—
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit poured so widely forth—
So long obeyed—so little worth!

XVI

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock!

Foredoomed by God—by man accurst,
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock;
He in his fall preserved his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

XVII

There was a day—there was an hour,
While earth was Gaul's—Gaul thine—
When that immeasurable power
Unsated to resign
Had been an act of purer fame
Than gathers round Marengo's name,
And gilded thy decline,
Through the long twilight of all time,
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

XVIII

But thou forsooth must be a king,
And don the purple vest,
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.
Where is that faded garment? where
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
The star, the string, the crest?
Vain froward child of empire! say,
Are all thy playthings snatched away?

XIX

Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the Great;
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?

Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—
The Cincinnatus of the West,

Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeathed the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but one!

1814.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

I

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

II

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

III

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

1815.

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

I

Oh! snatched away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

II

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturbed the dead!

III

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

1815.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

I

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the
sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath
 blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

III

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the
 blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew
 still!

IV

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his
 pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

VI

And the widows of Asshur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the
 sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
 When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmed ocean's pausing,
 The waves lie still and gleaming,
 And the lulled winds seem dreaming:
 And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep;
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep:
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion,
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

1815.

'O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
 Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
 Felix! in imo qui scatentem
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.'

GRAY'S *Poemata*.

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it
 takes away,
 When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's
 dull decay;
 'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone,
 which fades so fast,
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth
 itself be past.
 Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of
 happiness
 Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:

The magnet of their course is gone, or only points
in vain

The shore to which their shivered sail shall never
stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself
comes down ;

It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream
its own ;

That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our
tears,

And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the
ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth
distract the breast,

Through midnight hours that yield no more their
former hope of rest ;

'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined turret
wreathe,

All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and
grey beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have
been,

Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a
vanished scene ;

As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish
though they be,

So, midst the withered waste of life, those tears
would flow to me.

March, 1815.

SO, WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING

I

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

II

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

III

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

1817.

TO THOMAS MOORE

I

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee!

II

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

III

Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on ;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

IV

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasped upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

V

With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be—peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

July, 1817.

EPISTLE FROM MR. MURRAY TO
DR. POLIDORI

DEAR Doctor, I have read your play,
Which is a good one in its way,—
Purges the eyes and moves the bowels,
And drenches handkerchiefs like towels
With tears, that, in a flux of grief,
Afford hysterical relief
To shattered nerves and quickened pulses,
Which your catastrophe convulses.

I like your moral and machinery ;
Your plot, too, has such scope for scenery ;
Your dialogue is apt and smart :
The play's concoction full of art

Your hero raves, your heroine cries;
All stab, and everybody dies.
In short, your tragedy would be
The very thing to hear and see:
And for a piece of publication,
If I decline on this occasion,
It is not that I am not sensible
To merits in themselves ostensible,
But—and I grieve to speak it—plays
Are drugs—mere drugs, sir—now-a-days.
I had a heavy loss by ‘Manuel’,—
Too lucky if it prove not annual,—
And Sotheby, with his ‘Orestes’,
(Which, by the by, the author’s best is,)
Has lain so very long on hand,
That I despair of all demand.
I’ve advertised, but see my books,
Or only watch my shopman’s looks;—
Still Ivan, Ina, and such lumber,
My back-shop glut, my shelves encumber.

There’s Byron too, who once did better,
Has sent me, folded in a letter,
A sort of—it’s no more a drama
Than Darnley, Ivan, or Kehama:
So altered since last year his pen is,
I think he’s lost his wits at Venice.
In short, sir, what with one and t’other,
I dare not venture on another.
I write in haste; excuse each blunder;
The coaches through the streets so thunder!
My room’s so full—we’ve Gifford here
Reading MS., with Hookham Frere,
Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
Of some of our forthcoming Articles.

The Quarterly—Ah, sir, if you
Had but the genius to review!—
A smart critique upon St. Helena,
Or if you only would but tell in a
Short compass what——but to resume:
As I was saying, sir, the room—
The room's so full of wits and bards,
Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and Wards,
And others, neither bards nor wits:—
My humble tenement admits
All persons in the dress of gent,
From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.

A party dines with me to-day,
All clever men, who make their way;
Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,
Are all partakers of my pantry.
They're at this moment in discussion
On poor De Staël's late dissolution.
Her book, they say, was in advance—
Pray Heaven, she tell the truth of France.
Thus run our time and tongues away;—
But, to return, sir, to your play:
Sorry, sir, but I cannot deal,
Unless 'twere acted by O'Neill;
My hands so full, my head so busy,
I'm almost dead, and always dizzy;
And so, with endless truth and hurry,
Dear Doctor, I am yours,

JOHN MURRAY.

August, 1817.

STANZAS WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN
FLORENCE AND PISA

OH, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is
wrinkled?

'Tis but as a dead-flower with May-dew besprinkled.
Then away with all such from the head that is
hoary!

What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give
glory!

Oh FAME!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover,
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround
thee;

When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my
story,

I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

November, 1821.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

MISSOLONGHI, Jan. 22, 1824.

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regrettest thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honourable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—
 A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
 Then look around, and choose thy ground,
 And take thy rest.

FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

(1) GREECE

CANTO II, STANZAS LXXIII-LXXVI

FAIR Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
 Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!
 Who now shall lead thy scattered children forth,
 And long accustomed bondage uncreate?
 Not such thy sons who whilome did await,
 The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
 In bleak Thermopylae's sepulchral strait—
 Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
 Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the
 tomb?

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow
 Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
 Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now
 Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?
 Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
 But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
 Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
 Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand;
 From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed,
 unmanned.

In all save form alone, how changed! and who
 That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
 Who would but deem their bosoms burned anew
 With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!

And many dream withal the hour is nigh
That gives them back their fathers' heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful
page.

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must strike the
blow?

By their right arms the conquest must be
wrought?

Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!

True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.

Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe!

Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the
same;

Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

(2) WATERLOO

CANTO III, STANZAS XXI-XXVIII

THERE was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave
men;

A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;

But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising
knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure
meet

To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once
more,

As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!

Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could
quell;

He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking
sighs

Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could
rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—‘The foe! they
come! they come!’

And wild and high the ‘Cameron’s gathering’
rose!

The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn’s hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon
foes:—

How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan’s, Donald’s fame rings in each clans-
man’s ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green
leaves,

Dewy with nature’s tear-drops as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e’er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold
and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
 Battle's magnificently stern array!
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is covered thick with other clay,
 Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
 Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial
 blent!

(3) VENICE

CANTO IV, STANZAS I-III

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
 A palace and a prison on each hand:
 I saw from out the wave her structures rise
 As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
 A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
 Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
 O'er the far times, when many a subject land
 Looked to the wingéd Lion's marble piles,
 Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred
 isles!

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
 Rising with her tiara of proud towers
 At airy distance, with majestic motion,
 A ruler of the waters and their powers:
 And such she was;—her daughters had their
 dowers
 From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
 Poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
 In purple was she robed, and of her feast
 Monarchs partook, and deemed their dignity in-
 creased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
 And silent rows the songless gondolier;
 Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
 And music meets not always now the ear:
 Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
 States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
 Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
 The pleasant place of all festivity,
 The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

(4) THE COLISEUM

CANTO IV, STANZAS CXXXIX-CXLIV

AND here the buzz of eager nations ran,
 In murmured pity, or loud-roared applause,
 As man was slaughtered by his fellow-man.
 And wherefore slaughtered? wherefore, but be-
 cause
 Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
 And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not?
 What matters where we fall to fill the maws
 Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
 Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,
 And his drooped head sinks gradually low—
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing
 slow
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the
 wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He recked not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butchered to make a Roman holiday—
All this rushed with his blood—Shall he expire
And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and glut your
ire!

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody
steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the
ways,
And roared or murmured like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint
rays
On the arena void—seats crushed—walls bowed—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely
loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been reared;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.
Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is neared:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have
reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of
time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Caesar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye
tread.

(5) THE OCEAN

CANTO IV, STANZAS CLXXVIII—CLXXXIII

THERE is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and un-
known.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he
wields

For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him
lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which
mar

Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save
thee—

Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were
free,

And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou;—
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow:
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's
form

Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,—

Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm,

Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime

Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime,

The image of eternity, the throne

Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime

The monsters of the deep are made; each zone

Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless,
alone.

THE LAND OF THE SUN

From 'The Bride of Abydos'

KNOW ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their
clime?

Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the
turtle,

Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime!

Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,

Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever
shine;

Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with
perfume,

Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl in her bloom;

Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,

And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;

Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the
sky,

In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,

And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;

Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,

And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?

'Tis the clime of the East ; 'tis the land of the Sun—
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have
done ?

Oh ! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which
they tell.

FROM 'THE CORSAIR'

(1) THE CORSAIR'S LIFE

CANTO I, STANZA I

'O'ER the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
Survey our empire, and behold our home !
These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.
Ours the wild life in tumult still to range
From toil to rest, and joy in every change.
Oh, who can tell ? not thou, luxurious slave !
Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave ;
Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease !
Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure cannot
please—
Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,
And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,
The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,
That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way ?
That for itself can woo the approaching fight,
And turn what some deem danger to delight ;
That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,
And where the feebler faint can only feel—
Feel—to the rising bosom's inmost core,
Its hope awaken and its spirit soar ?

No dread of death—if with us die our foes—
Save that it seems even duller than repose:
Come when it will—we snatch the life of life—
When lost—what recks it—but disease or strife?
Let him who crawls enamoured of decay,
Cling to his couch, and sicken years away:
Heave his thick breath, and shake his palsied head;
Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.
While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes control.
His corse may boast its urn and narrow cave,
And they who loathed his life may gild his grave:
Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,
When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.
For us, even banquets fond regret supply
In the red cup that crowns our memory;
And the brief epitaph in danger's day,
When those who win at length divide the prey,
And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each brow,
How had the brave who fell exulted *now!*'

(2)

CANTO I, STANZAS XI-XII

YET was not Conrad thus by Nature sent
To lead the guilty—guilt's worse instrument—
His soul was changed, before his deeds had driven
Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven.
Warped by the world in Disappointment's school,
In words too wise, in conduct *there* a fool;
Too firm to yield, and far too proud to stoop,
Doomed by his very virtues for a dupe,
He cursed those virtues as the cause of ill,
And not the traitors who betrayed him still;

Nor deemed that gifts bestowed on better men
Had left him joy, and means to give again.
Feared, shunned, belied, ere youth had lost her force,
He hated man too much to feel remorse,
And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,
To pay the injuries of some on all.
He knew himself a villain—but he deemed
The rest no better than the thing he seemed ;
And scorned the best as hypocrites who hid
Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did.
He knew himself detested, but he knew
The hearts that loathed him, crouched and dreaded
too.

Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt
From all affection and from all contempt :
His name could sadden, and his acts surprise ;
But they that feared him dared not to despise :
Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake
The slumbering venom of the folded snake :
'The first may turn, but not avenge the blow ;
'The last expires, but leaves no living foe ;
Fast to the doomed offender's form it clings,
And he may crush—not conquer—still it stings !

None are all evil—quickenings round his heart
One softer feeling would not yet depart ;
Oft could he sneer at others as beguiled
By passions worthy of a fool or child ;
Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,
And even in him it asks the name of Love !
Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged,
Felt but for one from whom he never ranged ;
Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
He shunned, nor sought, but coldly passed them by ;

Though many a beauty drooped in prisoned bower,
None ever soothed his most unguarded hour.
Yes—it was Love—if thoughts of tenderness
Tried in temptation, strengthened by distress,
Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,
And yet—oh more than all! untired by time;
Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,
Could render sullen were she near to smile,
Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent
On her one murmur of his discontent;
Which still would meet with joy, with calmness
part,
Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart;
Which nought removed, nor menaced to remove—
If there be love in mortals—this was love!
He was a villain—ay, reproaches shower
On him—but not the passion, nor its power,
Which only proved, all other virtues gone,
Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one!

(3) DEEP IN MY SOUL

CANTO I, STANZA XIV

1

DEEP in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.

2

There, in its centre, a sepulchral lamp
Burns the slow flame, eternal, but unseen;
Which not the darkness of despair can damp,
Though vain its ray as it had never been.

3

Remember me—Oh! pass not thou my grave
Without one thought whose relics there recline:
The only pang my bosom dare not brave
Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

4

My fondest, faintest, latest accents hear—
Grief for the dead not virtue can reprove;
Then give me all I ever asked—a tear,
The first—last—sole reward of so much love!

‘THE SIEGE OF CORINTH’

THE ASSAULT

STANZAS XXII-XXIV

THE night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The Morning from her mantle grey,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they’re
borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude’s
hum,
And the clash, and the shout, ‘They come! they
come!’
The horsetails are plucked from the ground and
the sword
From its sheath; and they form, and but wait for
the word.

Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman,
Strike your tents, and throng to the van;
Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
That the fugitive may flee in vain,
When he breaks from the town; and none escape,
Aged or young, in the Christian shape;
While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.
The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the bit;
The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled before:
Forms in his phalanx each janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,
So is the blade of his scimitar;
The khan and the pachas are all at their post;
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;
Leave not in Corinth a living one—
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
God and the prophet—Alla Hu!
Up to the skies with that wild halloo!
'There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to
scale;
And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye
fail?
He who first downs with the red cross may crave
His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and
have!'
Thus uttered Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;
The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear,

And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—
Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to
die:

Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent;
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
Strewed the earth like broken glass,
Shivered by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levelled plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapped by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renewed
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heaped by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:

Nothing there, save death, was mute:
 Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
 For quarter, or for victory,
 Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
 Which makes the distant cities wonder
 How the sounding battle goes,
 If with them, or for their foes;
 If they must mourn, or may rejoice
 In that annihilating voice,
 Which pierces the deep hills through and through
 With an echo dread and new:
 You might have heard it, on that day,
 O'er Salamis and Megara;
 (We have heard the hearers say,)
 Even unto Piraeus' bay.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

SONNET ON CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art:
 For there thy habitation is the heart—
 The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
 And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—
 To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
 Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
 Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
 And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
 Until his very steps have left a trace
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
 By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface
 For they appeal from tyranny to God.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

I

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are banned, and barred—forbidden fare:
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;
That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling place;
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,

A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together—yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but joined in heart,
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.

Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
 A grating sound, not full and free,
 As they of yore were wont to be:
 It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
 And to uphold and cheer the rest
 I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.
 The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven—
 For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distressed
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
 (When day was beautiful to me
 As to young eagles, being free)—
 A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
 Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
 And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorred to view below.

V

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind;

Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perished in the foremost rank

With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit withered with their clank,

I saw it silently decline—

And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.

He was a hunter of the hills,

Had followed there the deer and wolf;
To him his dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Lemman lies by Chillon's walls:

A thousand feet in depth below

Its massy waters meet and flow;

Thus much the fathom-line was sent

From Chillon's snow-white battlement,

Which round about the wave intrals:

A double dungeon wall and wave

Have made—and like a living grave.

Below the surface of the lake

The dark vault lies wherein we lay,

We heard it ripple night and day;

Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;

And I have felt the winter's spray

Wash through the bars when winds were high

And wanton in the happy sky;

And then the very rock hath rocked,

And I have felt it shake, unshocked,

Because I could have smiled to see

The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moistened many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died, and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—

They coldly laughed, and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread;
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmixed with such—but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind:

With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray ;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most ;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less :
I listened, but I could not hear ;
I called, for I was wild with fear ;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonishéd ;
I called, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rushed to him:—I found him not,
I only stirred in this black spot,
I only lived, *I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew ;
The last, the sole, the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe :
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas ! my own was full as chill ;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,

But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.

I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope but—faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX

What next befell me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and grey;
It was not night—it was not day;
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time,
No check—no change—no good—no crime,
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,

And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery ;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track ;
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
 And tamer than upon the tree ;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
 And seemed to say them all for me !
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more :
It seemed like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
 Sweet bird ! I could not wish for thine !
Or if it were, in wingèd guise,
A visitant from Paradise ;
For—Heaven forgive that thought ! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile—
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me ;

But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone,
Lone—as the corse within its shroud,
Lone—as a solitary cloud,

A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was:—my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,

For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.

The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain.
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
And yet my glance, too much opprest,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count, I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free;
I asked not why, and recked not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair,
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade,

Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
 And why should I feel less than they?
 We were all inmates of one place,
 And I, the monarch of each race,
 Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
 In quiet we had learned to dwell;
 My very chains and I grew friends,
 So much a long communion tends
 To make us what we are:—even I
 Regained my freedom with a sigh.

FROM 'DON JUAN'

(1) DEDICATION

CANTO I

I

BOB SOUTHEY! You're a poet—Poet-laureate,
 And representative of all the race;
 Although 'tis true that you turned out a Tory at
 Last,—yours has lately been a common case;
 And now, my Epic Renegade! what are ye at?
 With all the Lakers, in and out of place?
 A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye
 Like 'four and twenty Blackbirds in a pye;

II

'Which pye being opened they began to sing'
 (This old song and new simile holds good),
 'A dainty dish to set before the King,'
 Or Regent, who admires such kind of food;—
 And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,
 But like a hawk encumbered with his hood,—
 Explaining metaphysics to the nation—
 I wish he would explain his Explanation.

III

You, Bob! are rather insolent, you know,
At being disappointed in your wish
To supersede all warblers here below,
And be the only Blackbird in the dish;
And then you overstrain yourself, or so,
And tumble downward like the flying fish
Gasping on deck, because you soar too high, Bob,
And fall, for lack of moisture quite a-dry, Bob!

IV

And Wordsworth, in a rather long 'Excursion'
(I think the quarto holds five hundred pages),
Has given a sample from the vasty version
Of his new system to perplex the sages;
'Tis poetry—at least by his assertion,
And may appear so when the dog-star rages—
And he who understands it would be able
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

V

You—Gentlemen! by dint of long seclusion
From better company, have kept your own
At Keswick, and, through still continued fusion
Of one another's minds, at last have grown
To deem as a most logical conclusion,
That Poesy has wreaths for you alone:
There is a narrowness in such a notion,
Which makes me wish you'd change your lakes for
ocean.

VI

I would not imitate the petty thought,
Nor coin my self-love to so base a vice,
For all the glory your conversion brought,
Since gold alone should not have been its price.

You have your salary: was't for that you wrought?
 And Wordsworth has his place in the Excise.
 You're shabby fellows—true—but poets still,
 And duly seated on the immortal hill.

VII

Your bays may hide the baldness of your brows—
 Perhaps some virtuous blushes;—let them go—
 To you I envy neither fruit nor boughs—
 And for the fame you would engross below,
 The field is universal, and allows
 Scope to all such as feel the inherent glow:
 Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore, and Crabbe, will
 try
 'Gainst you the question with posterity.

VIII

For me, who, wandering with pedestrian Muses,
 Contend not with you on the wingéd steed,
 I wish your fate may yield ye, when she chooses,
 The fame you envy, and the skill you need;
 And recollect a poet nothing loses
 In giving to his brethren their full meed
 Of merit, and complaint of present days
 Is not the certain path to future praise.

IX

He that reserves his laurels for posterity
 (Who does not often claim the bright reversion)
 Has generally no great crop to spare it, he
 Being only injured by his own assertion;
 And although here and there some glorious rarity
 Arise like Titan from the sea's immersion,
 The major part of such appellants go
 To—God knows where—for no one else can know.

X

If, fallen in evil days on evil tongues,
Milton appealed to the Avenger, Time,
If Time, the Avenger, execrates his wrongs,
And makes the word 'Miltonic' mean '*sublime*',
He deigned not to belie his soul in songs,
Nor turn his very talent to a crime;
He did not loathe the Sire to laud the Son,
But closed the tyrant-hater he begun.

XI

Think'st thou, could he—the blind Old Man—arise,
Like Samuel from the grave, to freeze once more
The blood of monarchs with his prophecies,
Or be alive again—again all hoar
With time and trials, and those helpless eyes,
And heartless daughters—worn—and pale—and
poor;
Would *he* adore a sultan? *he* obey
The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh?

XII

Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid miscreant!
Dabbling its sleek young hands in Erin's gore,
And thus for wider carnage taught to pant,
Transferred to gorge upon a sister shore,
The vulgarest tool that Tyranny could want,
With just enough of talent, and no more,
To lengthen fetters by another fixed,
And offer poison long already mixed.

XIII

An orator of such set trash of phrase
Ineffably—legitimately vile,
That even its grossest flatterers dare not praise,
Nor foes—all nations—condescend to smile;

Not even a sprightly blunder's spark can blaze
From that Ixion grindstone's ceaseless toil,
That turns and turns to give the world a notion
Of endless torments and perpetual motion.

XIV

A bungler even in its disgusting trade,
And botching, patching, leaving still behind
Something of which its masters are afraid,
States to be curbed, and thoughts to be confined,
Conspiracy or Congress to be made—
Cobbling at manacles for all mankind—
A tinkering slave-maker, who mends old chains,
With God and man's abhorrence for its gains.

XV

If we may judge of matter by the mind,
Emasculated to the marrow *It*
Hath but two objects, how to serve, and bind,
Deeming the chain it wears even men may fit,
Eutropius of its many masters,—blind
To worth as freedom, wisdom as to wit,
Fearless—because *no* feeling dwells in ice,
Its very courage stagnates to a vice.

XVI

Where shall I turn me not to *view* its bonds,
For I will never *feel* them;—Italy!
Thy late reviving Roman soul desponds
Beneath the lie this State-thing breathed o'er
thee—
Thy clanking chain, and Erin's yet green wounds,
Have voices—tongues to cry aloud for me.
Europe has slaves, allies, kings, armies still,
And Southey lives to sing them very ill.

XVII

Meantime, Sir Laureate, I proceed to dedicate,
In honest simple verse, this song to you.
And, if in flattering strains I do not predicate,
'Tis that I still retain my 'buff and blue';
My politics as yet are all to educate:
Apostasy 's so fashionable, too,
To keep *one* creed's a task grown quite Herculean:
Is it not so, my Tory, Ultra-Julian?

(2) JULIA'S LETTER

CANTO I, STANZAS CXCH-CXCVII

'THEY tell me 'tis decided you depart:
'Tis wise—'tis well, but not the less a pain;
I have no further claim on your young heart,
Mine is the victim, and would be again:
To love too much has been the only art
I used;—I write in haste, and if a stain
Be on this sheet, 'tis not what it appears;
My eyeballs burn and throb, but have no tears.
'I loved, I love you, for this love have lost
State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own
esteem,
And yet cannot regret what it hath cost,
So dear is still the memory of that dream;
Yet, if I name my guilt, 'tis not to boast,
None can deem harshlier of me than I deem:
I trace this scrawl because I cannot rest—
I've nothing to reproach or to request.
'Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
'Tis woman's whole existence; man may range
The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart;
Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange

Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
And few there are whom these cannot estrange;
Men have all these resources, we but one,
To love again, and be again undone.

‘You will proceed in pleasure, and in pride,
Beloved and loving many; all is o’er
For me on earth, except some years to hide
My shame and sorrow deep in my heart’s core:
These I could bear, but cannot cast aside
The passion which still rages as before,—
And so farewell—forgive me, love me—No,
That word is idle now—but let it go.

‘My breast has been all weakness, is so yet;
But still I think I can collect my mind;
My blood still rushes where my spirit’s set,
As roll the waves before the settled wind;
My heart is feminine, nor can forget—
To all, except one image, madly blind;
So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,
As vibrates my fond heart to my fixed soul.

‘I have no more to say, but linger still,
And dare not set my seal upon this sheet,
And yet I may as well the task fulfil,
My misery can scarce be more complete:
I had not lived till now, could sorrow kill;
Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow would
meet,
And I must even survive this last adieu,
And bear with life to love and pray for you!’

(3) THE ISLES OF GREECE

CANTO III, STANZA LXXXVI

1

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

2

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse:
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' 'Islands of the Blest'.

3

The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

4

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations;—all were his!
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set where were they?

5

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—

The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

6

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though linked among a fettered race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

7

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylae!

8

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, 'Let one living head,
But one arise,—we come, we come!'
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

9

In vain—in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!

Hark! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

10

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet;
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

11

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

12

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

13

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

14

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
They have a king who buys and sells;
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells:
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

15

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

16

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM

1788–1845

VERSES PREFIXED TO THE 'LAY OF
ST. GENGULPHUS'

A FRANKLYN's dogge leped over a style
And hys name was littel Byngo!
B wyth a Y—Y wyth an N,
N wyth a G—G wyth an O—
They called hym littel Byngo!

Thys Franklyn, Syrs, he brewed goode ayle,
And he called it Rare goode Styngo!

S, T, Y, N, G, O!

He called it Rare goode Styngo!

Nowe is notte thys a prettie song?

I thinke it is bye Jyngo!

J wythe a Y,—N, G, O—

I sweare yt is by Jyngo!

Ingoldsby Legends.

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

THE Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair!

Bishop, and abbot, and prior were there;

Many a monk, and many a friar,

Many a knight, and many a squire,

With a great many more of lesser degree,—

In sooth a goodly company;

And they served the Lord Primate on bended knee.

Never, I ween,

Was a prouder seen,

Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,

Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims!

In and out

Through the motley rout,

That little Jackdaw kept hopping about;

Here and there

Like a dog in a fair,

Over comfits and cates,

And dishes and plates,

Cowl and cope, and rochet and pall,

Mitre and crosier! he hopped upon all!

With saucy air,

He perched on the chair

Where, in state, the great Lord Cardinal sat
In the great Lord Cardinal's great red hat;
 And he peered in the face
 Of his Lordship's Grace,
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,
'We two are the greatest folks here to-day!'
 And the priests, with awe,
 As such freaks they saw,
Said, 'The Devil must be in that little Jackdaw!'

The feast was over, the board was cleared,
The flaws and the custards had all disappeared,
And six little Singing-boys,—dear little souls!
In nice clean faces, and nice white stoles,

 Came, in order due,

 Two by two,

Marching that grand refectory through!
A nice little boy held a golden ewer,
Embossed and filled with water, as pure
As any that flows between Rheims and Namur,
Which a nice little boy stood ready to catch
In a fine golden hand-basin made to match.
Two nice little boys, rather more grown,
Carried lavender-water, and eau de Cologne;
And a nice little boy had a nice cake of soap,
Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope.

 One little boy more

 A napkin bore,

Of the best white diaper, fringed with pink,
And a Cardinal's Hat marked in 'permanent ink'.

The great Lord Cardinal turns at the sight
Of these nice little boys dressed all in white:

 From his finger he draws

 His costly turquoise;

And, not thinking at all about little Jackdaws,
Deposits it straight
By the side of his plate,
While the nice little boys on his Eminence wait;
Till, when nobody's dreaming of any such thing,
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring!

There's a cry and a shout,
And a deuce of a rout,
And nobody seems to know what they're about,
But the Monks have their pockets all turned inside
out.

The Friars are kneeling,
And hunting, and feeling
The carpet, the floor, and the walls, and the ceiling.

The Cardinal drew
Off each plum-coloured shoe,
And left his red stockings exposed to the view;
He peeps, and he feels
In the toes and the heels;
They turn up the dishes,—they turn up the
plates,—

They take up the poker and poke out the grates,
—They turn up the rugs,
They examine the mugs:—
But, no!—no such thing;—
They can't find THE RING!

And the Abbot declared that, 'when nobody
twigged it,
Some rascal or other had popped in, and prigged it!'

The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,
He called for his candle, his bell, and his book!
In holy anger, and pious grief,
He solemnly cursed that rascally thief!

He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed ;
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head ;
He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil, and wake in a fright ;
He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in
drinking,

He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in winking ;
He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying ;
He cursed him in walking, in riding, in flying,
He cursed him in living, he cursed him in dying!—
Never was heard such a terrible curse!!

But what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seemed one penny the worse!

The day was gone,
The night came on,
The Monks and the Friars they searched till dawn ;
When the Sacristan saw,
On crumpled claw,
Come limping a poor little lame Jackdaw!
No longer gay,
As on yesterday ;
His feathers all seemed to be turned the wrong
way ;—

His pinions drooped—he could hardly stand,—
His head was as bald as the palm of your hand:

His eye so dim,
So wasted each limb,
That, heedless of grammar, they all cried ‘THAT’S
HIM!—

That’s the scamp that has done this scandalous
thing!

That’s the thief that has got my Lord Cardinal’s
Ring!’

The poor little Jackdaw,
When the Monks he saw,
Feebly gave vent to the ghost of a caw;
And turned his bald head, as much as to say,
'Pray, be so good as to walk this way!'
Slower and slower
He limp'd on before,
Till they came to the back of the belfry door,
Where the first thing they saw,
Midst the sticks and the straw,
Was the RING in the nest of that little Jackdaw!
Then the great Lord Cardinal called for his book,
And off that terrible curse he took;
The mute expression
Served in lieu of confession,
And, being thus coupled with full restitution,
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution!
—When those words were heard,
That poor little bird
Was so changed in a moment, 'twas really absurd.

He grew sleek, and fat;
In addition to that,
A fresh crop of feathers came thick as a mat!
His tail waggled more
Even than before;
But no longer it wagged with an impudent air,
No longer he perched on the Cardinal's chair.
He hopped now about
With a gait devout;
At Matins, at Vespers, he never was out;
And, so far from any more pilfering deeds,
He always seemed telling the Confessor's beads.
If any one lied,—or if any one swore,—

Or slumbered in prayer-time and happened to snore
That good Jackdaw
Would give a great 'Caw!'
As much as to say, 'Don't do so any more!'
While many remarked, as his manners they saw,
That they 'never had known such a pious Jack-
daw!'

He long lived the pride
Of that country-side,
And at last in the odour of sanctity died;
When, as words were too faint
His merits to paint,
The Conclave determined to make him a Saint;
And on newly made Saints and Popes, as you know,
It's the custom, at Rome, new names to bestow,
So they canonized him by the name of Jim Crow!

Ingoldsby Legends.

CHARLES WOLFE

1791-1823

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our Hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a Warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the Foe and the Stranger would tread o'er his
head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the Spirit that's gone
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring:
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

SONG

OH say not that my heart is cold
To aught that once could warm it—
That Nature's form so dear of old
No more has power to charm it;

Or that th' ungenerous world can chill
One glow of fond emotion
For those who made it dearer still,
And shared my wild devotion.

Still oft those solemn scenes I view
In rapt and dreamy sadness;
Oft look on those who loved them too
With Fancy's idle gladness;
Again I longed to view the light
In Nature's features glowing;
Again to tread the mountain's height,
And taste the soul's o'erflowing.

Stern Duty rose, and frowning flung
His leaden chain around me;
With iron look and sullen tongue
He muttered as he bound me—
'The mountain breeze, the boundless heaven,
Unfit for toil the creature;
These for the free alone were given,—
But what have slaves with Nature?'

SONG

TO MARY

If I had thought thou couldst have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou couldst mortal be:
It never through my mind had past
The time would e'er be o'er,
And I on thee should look my last,
And thou shouldst smile no more!

And still upon that face I look,
And think 'twill smile again ;
And still the thought I will not brook,
That I must look in vain.
But when I speak—thou dost not say
What thou ne'er left'st unsaid ;
And now I feel, as well I may,
Sweet Mary, thou art dead !

If thou wouldst stay, e'en as thou art,
All cold and all serene—
I still might press thy silent heart,
And where thy smiles have been.
While e'en thy chill, bleak corse I have,
Thou seemest still mine own ;
But there—I lay thee in thy grave,
And I am now alone !

I do not think, where'er thou art,
Thou hast forgotten me ;
And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart
In thinking too of thee :
Yet there was round thee such a dawn
Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
And never can restore !

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

1792-1822

OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an antique land
 Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
 And on the pedestal these words appear:
 'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES

I

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,
 The waves are dancing fast and bright,
 Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
 The purple noon's transparent might,
 The breath of the moist earth is light,
 Around its unexpanded buds;
 Like many a voice of one delight,
 The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
 The City's voice itself, is soft like Solitude's.

II

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
 With green and purple seaweeds strown;

I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:
I sit upon the sands alone,—
The lightning of the noontide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

III

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content surpassing wealth
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround—
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;—
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

IV

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear,
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

V

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I, when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan;

They might lament—for I am one
 Whom men love not,—and yet regret,
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun
 Shall on its stainless glory set,
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
 The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until
 Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
 Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odours plain and hill:
 Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
 Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's com-
 motion,
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
 Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and
 Ocean,
 Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
 On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: oh, hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O, Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright:

I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber window, Sweet!

II

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The Champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart;—
As I must on thine,
Oh, belovèd as thou art!

III

Oh lift me from the grass!
I die! I faint! I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;—
Oh! press it to thine own again,
Where it will break at last.

TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe Spirit!

Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart

In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher

From the earth thou springest

Like a cloud of fire;

The blue deep thou wingest,

And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,
Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see—we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is over-
flowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her
bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aëreal hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from
the view!

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered;
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-
wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass:
Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard

Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?

What fields, or waves, or mountains?

What shapes of sky or plain?

What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of
pain?

With thy clear keen joyance

Languor cannot be:

Shadow of annoyance

Never came near thee:

Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,

Thou of death must deem

Things more true and deep

Than we mortals dream,

Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,

And pine for what is not:

Our sincerest laughter

With some pain is fraught;

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest
thought.

Yet if we could scorn

Hate, and pride, and fear;

If we were things born

Not to shed a tear,

I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures

Of delightful sound,

Better than all treasures

That in books are found,

Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then—as I am listening
now.

TO THE MOON

ART thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

SUMMER AND WINTER

It was a bright and cheerful afternoon,
Towards the end of the sunny month of June,
When the north wind congregates in crowds
The floating mountains of the silver clouds
From the horizon—and the stainless sky
Opens beyond them like eternity.
All things rejoiced beneath the sun; the weeds,
The river, and the corn-fields, and the reeds;
The willow leaves that glanced in the light
breeze,
And the firm foliage of the larger trees.

It was a winter such as when birds die
In the deep forests; and the fishes lie
Stiffened in the translucent ice, which makes
Even the mud and slime of the warm lakes

A wrinkled clod as hard as brick ; and when,
Among their children, comfortable men
Gather about great fires, and yet feel cold :
Alas, then, for the homeless beggar old !

THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams ;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast ;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits ;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits ;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea ;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,

Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead;
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea
beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of Heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest;
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and
swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,—
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the Powers of the air are chained to my
chair,
Is the million-coloured bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove,
While the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
And the nursling of the Sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain when with never a stain
The pavilion of Heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex
gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the
tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

I

THE fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the Ocean,
The winds of Heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.
Why not I with mine?—

II

See the mountains kiss high Heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:
What are all these kissings worth
If thou kiss not me?

ARETHUSA

I

ARETHUSA arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains,—
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leapt down the rocks,
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;—
Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine

Which slopes to the western gleams ;
And gliding and springing
She went, ever singing,
In murmurs as soft as sleep ;
The Earth seemed to love her,
And Heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.

II

Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains strook ;
And opened a chasm
In the rocks—with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south wind
It concealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below.
The beard and the hair
Of the River-god were
Seen through the torrent's sweep ;
As he followed the light
Of the fleet nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

III

'Oh, save me! Oh, guide me!
And bid the deep hide me,
For he grasps me now by the hair!'
The loud Ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,

And divided at her prayer;
And under the water
The Earth's white daughter
Fled like a sunny beam;
Behind her descended
Her billows, unblended
With the brackish Dorian stream:—
Like a gloomy stain
On the emerald main
Alpheus rushed behind,—
As an eagle pursuing
A dove to its ruin
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

IV

Under the bowers
Where the Ocean Powers
Sit on their pearlèd thrones;
Through the coral woods
Of the weltering floods,
Over heaps of unvalued stones;
Through the dim beams
Which amid the streams
Weave a network of coloured light;
And under the caves,
Where the shadowy waves
Are as green as the forest's night:—
Outspeeding the shark,
And the sword-fish dark,
Under the Ocean foam,
And up through the rifts
Of the mountain cliffs
They passed to their Dorian home.

V

And now from their fountains
In Enna's mountains,
Down one vale where the morning basks,
Like friends once parted
Grown single-hearted,
They ply their watery tasks.
At sunrise they leap
From their cradles steep
In the cave of the shelving hill;
At noontide they flow
Through the woods below
And the meadows of asphodel;
And at night they sleep
In the rocking deep
Beneath the Ortygian shore;—
Like spirits that lie
In the azure sky
When they love but live no more.

THE QUESTION

I

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the way,
Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in
dream.

II

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the earth,

The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxslips; tender bluebells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that
wets—

Like a child, half in tenderness and mirth—
Its mother's face with Heaven's collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

III

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cowbind and the moonlight-coloured may,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
Was the bright dew, yet drained not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray;
And flowers azure, black, and streaked with gold,
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

IV

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked
with white,
And starry river buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

V

Methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
Were mingled or opposed, the like array

Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours
Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,
I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it!—Oh! to whom?

THE SENSITIVE PLANT

PART FIRST

A SENSITIVE Plant in a garden grew,
And the young winds fed it with silver dew,
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And closed them beneath the kisses of Night.

And the Spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with bliss
In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,
Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odour, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
Till they die of their own dear loveliness;

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair and passion so pale
That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green;

And the hyacinth purple, and white, and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odour within the sense;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath addressed,
Which unveiled the depth of her glowing breast,
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air
The soul of her beauty and love lay bare:

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
As a Maenad, its moonlight-coloured cup,
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,
Gazed through clear dew on the tender sky;

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet tuberose,
The sweetest flower for scent that blows;
And all rare blossoms from every clime
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

And on the stream whose inconstant bosom
Was pranked, under boughs of embowering blossom,
With golden and green light, slanting through
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-buds glimmered by,
And around them the soft stream did glide and
dance
With a motion of sweet sound and radiance.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of moss,
Which led through the garden along and across,
Some open at once to the sun and the breeze,
Some lost among bowers of blossoming trees,

Were all paved with daisies and delicate bells
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,
And flowrets which, drooping as day drooped too,
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,
To roof the glow-worm from the evening dew.

And from this undefilèd Paradise
The flowers (as an infant's awakening eyes
Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet
Can first lull, and at last must awaken it),

When Heaven's blithe winds had unfolded them,
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,
Shone smiling to Heaven, and every one
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun;

For each one was interpenetrated
With the light and the odour its neighbour shed,
Like young lovers whom youth and love make dear
Wrapped and filled by their mutual atmosphere.

But the Sensitive Plant which could give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,
Received more than all, it loved more than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the
giver,—

For the Sensitive Plant has no bright flower;
Radiance and odour are not its dower;
It loves, even like Love, its deep heart is full,
It desires what it has not, the Beautiful!

The light winds which from unsustaining wings
Shed the music of many murmurings;
The beams which dart from many a star
Of the flowers whose hues they bear afar;

The plumèd insects swift and free,
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,
Laden with light and odour, which pass
Over the gleam of the living grass;

The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides high,
Then wander like spirits among the spheres,
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it bears;

The quivering vapours of dim noontide,
Which like a sea o'er the warm earth glide,
In which every sound, and odour, and beam,
Move, as reeds in a single stream;

Each and all like ministering angels were
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to bear,
Whilst the lagging hours of the day went by
Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.

And when evening descended from Heaven above,
And the Earth was all rest, and the air was all love,
And delight, though less bright, was far more deep,
And the day's veil fell from the world of sleep,

And the beasts, and the birds, and the insects were
drowned

In an ocean of dreams without a sound;
Whose waves never mark, though they ever impress
The light sand which paves it, consciousness;

(Only overhead the sweet nightingale
Ever sang more sweet as the day might fail,
And snatches of its Elysian chant
Were mixed with the dreams of the Sensitive
Plant);—

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest
Upgathered into the bosom of rest;
A sweet child weary of its delight,
The feeblest and yet the favourite,
Cradled within the embrace of Night.

PART SECOND

There was a Power in this sweet place,
An Eve in this Eden; a ruling Grace
Which to the flowers, did they waken or dream,
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,
Whose form was upborne by a lovely mind
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien and motion
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to even:
And the meteors of that sublunar Heaven,
Like the lamps of the air when Night walks forth,
Laughed round her footsteps up from the Earth!

She had no companion of mortal race,
But her tremulous breath and her flushing face
Told, whilst the morn kissed the sleep from her eyes,
That her dreams were less slumber than Paradise:

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet sake
Had deserted Heaven while the stars were awake,
As if yet around her he lingering were,
Though the veil of daylight concealed him from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it pressed;
You might hear by the heaving of her breast,
That the coming and going of the wind
Brought pleasure there and left passion behind.

And wherever her æëry footstep trod,
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy sweep,
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden sweet
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet;
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came
From her glowing fingers through all their frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the stream
On those that were faint with the sunny beam;
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers
She emptied the rain of the thunder-showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender hands,
And sustained them with rods and osier-bands;
If the flowers had been her own infants, she
Could never have nursed them more tenderly.

And all killing insects and gnawing worms,
And things of obscene and unlovely forms,
She bore, in a basket of Indian woof,
Into the rough woods far aloof,—

In a basket, of grasses and wild-flowers full,
The freshest her gentle hands could pull
For the poor banished insects, whose intent,
Although they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephemeris
Whose path is the lightning's, and soft moths that
kiss
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm not, did she
Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,
Where butterflies dream of the life to come,
She left clinging round the smooth and dark
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.

This fairest creature from earliest Spring
Thus moved through the garden ministering
All the sweet season of Summertime,
And ere the first leaf looked brown—she died!

PART THIRD

Three days the flowers of the garden fair,
Like stars when the moon is awakened, were,
Or the waves of Baiae, ere luminous
She floats up through the smoke of Vesuvius.

And on the fourth, the Sensitive Plant
Felt the sound of the funeral chant,
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and slow,
And the sobs of the mourners, deep and low;

The weary sound and the heavy breath,
And the silent motions of passing death,
And the smell, cold, oppressive, and dank,
Sent through the pores of the coffin-plank;

The dark grass, and the flowers among the grass,
Were bright with tears as the crowd did pass;
From their sighs the wind caught a mournful tone,
And sate in the pines, and gave groan for groan.

The garden, once fair, became cold and foul,
Like the corpse of her who had been its soul,
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap
To make men tremble who never weep.

Swift Summer into the Autumn flowed,
And frost in the mist of the morning rode,
Though the noonday sun looked clear and bright,
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.

The rose-leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,
Paved the turf and the moss below.
The lilies were drooping, and white, and wan,
Like the head and the skin of a dying man.

And Indian plants, of scent and hue
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,
Leaf after leaf, day after day,
Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and grey, and red,
And white with the whiteness of what is dead,
Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind passed;
Their whistling noise made the birds aghast.

And the gusty winds waked the wingèd seeds,
Out of their birthplace of ugly weeds,
Till they clung round many a sweet flower's stem,
Which rotted into the earth with them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet
Fell from the stalks on which they were set;
And the eddies drove them here and there,
As the winds did those of the upper air.

Then the rain came down, and the broken stalks
Were bent and tangled across the walks;
And the leafless network of parasite bowers
Massed into ruin; and all sweet flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the snow
All loathliest weeds began to grow,

Whose coarse leaves were splashed with many a
speck,

Like the water-snake's belly and the toad's back.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels rank,
And the dock, and henbane, and hemlock dank,
Stretched out its long and hollow shank,
And stifled the air till the dead wind stank.

And plants, at whose names the verse feels loath,
Filled the place with a monstrous undergrowth,
Prickly, and pulpous, and blistering, and blue,
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

And agarics, and fungi, with mildew and mould
Started like mist from the wet ground cold;
Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead
With a spirit of growth had been animated!

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,
Made the running rivulet thick and dumb,
And at its outlet flags huge as stakes
Dammed it up with roots knotted like water-snakes.

And hour by hour, when the air was still,
The vapours arose which have strength to kill;
At morn they were seen, at noon they were felt,
At night they were darkness no star could melt.

And unctuous meteors from spray to spray
Crept and flitted in broad noonday
Unseen; every branch on which they alit
By a venomous blight was burned and bit.

The Sensitive Plant, like one forbid,
Wept, and the tears within each lid
Of its folded leaves, which together grew,
Were changed to a blight of frozen glue.

For the leaves soon fell, and the branches soon
By the heavy axe of the blast were hewn;
The sap shrank to the root through every pore
As blood to a heart that will beat no more.

For Winter came: the wind was his whip:
One choppy finger was on his lip:
He had torn the cataracts from the hills
And they clanked at his girdle like manacles;

His breath was a chain which without a sound
The earth, and the air, and the water bound;
He came, fiercely driven, in his chariot-throne
By the tenfold blasts of the Arctic zone.

Then the weeds which were forms of living death
Fled from the frost to the earth beneath.
Their decay and sudden flight from frost
Was but like the vanishing of a ghost!

And under the roots of the Sensitive Plant
The moles and the dormice died for want:
The birds dropped stiff from the frozen air
And were caught in the branches naked and bare.

First there came down a thawing rain
And its dull drops froze on the boughs again;
Then there steamed up a freezing dew
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain grew;

And a northern whirlwind, wandering about
Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child out,
Shook the boughs thus laden, and heavy, and
stiff,
And snapped them off with his rigid griff.

When Winter had gone and Spring came back
The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck ;
But the mandrakes, and toadstools, and docks, and
 darnels,
Rose like the dead from their ruined charnels.

CONCLUSION

Whether the Sensitive Plant, or that
Which within its boughs like a Spirit sat,
Ere its outward form had known decay,
Now felt this change, I cannot say.

Whether that Lady's gentle mind,
No longer with the form combined
Which scattered love, as stars do light,
Found sadness, where it left delight,

I dare not guess ; but in this life
Of error, ignorance, and strife,
Where nothing is, but all things seem,
And we the shadows of the dream,

It is a modest creed, and yet
Pleasant if one considers it,
To own that death itself must be,
Like all the rest, a mockery.

That garden sweet, that lady fair,
And all sweet shapes and odours there,
In truth have never passed away :
'Tis we, 'tis ours, are changed ; not they.

For love, and beauty, and delight,
There is no death nor change : their might
Exceeds our organs, which endure
No light, being themselves obscure.

THE POET'S WORLD

ON a poet's lips I slept
Dreaming like a love-adept
In the sound his breathing kept;
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,
But feeds on the aërial kisses
Of shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses.
He will watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illumine
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,
Nor heed nor see, what things they be;
But from these create he can
Forms more real than living man,
Nurslings of immortality!

Prometheus Unbound.

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

A WIDOW BIRD

A WIDOW bird sate mourning for her love
Upon a wintry bough;
The frozen wind crept on above,
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare.
No flower upon the ground,
And little motion in the air
Except the mill-wheel's sound.

TO NIGHT

I

SWIFTLY walk o'er the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

II

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long-sought!

III

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

IV

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,
 No, not thee!

V

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
 Come soon, soon!

A BRIDAL SONG

I

THE golden gates of Sleep unbar
 Where Strength and Beauty, met to-
 gether,
Kindle their image like a star
 In a sea of glassy weather!
Night, with all thy stars look down,—
 Darkness, weep thy holiest dew,—
Never smiled the inconstant moon
 On a pair so true.
Let eyes not see their own delight;—
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight
 Oft renew.

II

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her!
Holy stars, permit no wrong!
And return to wake the sleeper,
Dawn,—ere it be long!
O joy! O fear! what will be done
In the absence of the sun!
Come along!

TO JANE: THE RECOLLECTION

I

Now the last day of many days,
All beautiful and bright as thou,
The loveliest and the last, is dead,
Rise, Memory, and write its praise!
Up,—to thy wonted work! come, trace
The epitaph of glory fled,—
For now the Earth has changed its face,
A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

II

We wandered to the Pine Forest
That skirts the Ocean's foam,
The lightest wind was in its nest,
The tempest in its home.
The whispering waves were half asleep,
The clouds were gone to play,
And on the bosom of the deep
The smile of Heaven lay;
It seemed as if the hour were one
Sent from beyond the skies,
Which scattered from above the sun
A light of Paradise.

III

We paused amid the pines that stood
The giants of the waste,
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude
As serpents interlaced,
And soothed by every azure breath,
That under Heaven is blown,
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own;
Now all the tree-tops lay asleep,
Like green waves on the sea,
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean woods may be.

IV

How calm it was!—the silence there
By such a chain was bound
That even the busy woodpecker
Made stiller by her sound
The inviolable quietness;
The breath of peace we drew
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew.
There seemed from the remotest seat
Of the white mountain waste,
To the soft flower beneath our feet,
A magic circle traced,—
A spirit interfused around,
A thrilling, silent life,—
To momentary peace it bound
Our mortal nature's strife;
And still I felt the centre of
The magic circle there
Was one fair form that filled with love
The lifeless atmosphere.

v

We paused beside the pools that lie
Under the forest bough,—
Each seemed as 'twere a little sky
Gulfed in a world below ;
A firmament of purple light
Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night,
And purer than the day—
In which the lovely forests grew,
As in the upper air,
More perfect both in shape and hue
Than any spreading there.
There lay the glade and neighbouring lawn,
And through the dark green wood
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
Out of a speckled cloud.
Sweet views which in our world above
Can never well be seen,
Were imaged by the water's love
Of that fair forest green.
And all was interfused beneath
With an Elysian glow,
An atmosphere without a breath,
A softer day below.
Like one beloved the scene had lent
To the dark water's breast,
Its every leaf and lineament
With more than truth expressed ;
Until an envious wind crept by,
Like an unwelcome thought,
Which from the mind's too faithful eye
Blots one dear image out.

Though thou art ever fair and kind,
The forests ever green,
Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind;
Than calm in waters seen.

REMEMBRANCE

I

SWIFTER far than summer's flight—
Swifter far than youth's delight—
Swifter far than happy night,
Art thou come and gone—
As the earth when leaves are dead,
As the night when sleep is sped,
As the heart when joy is fled,
I am left lone, alone.

II

The swallow summer comes again—
The owlet night resumes her reign—
But the wild-swan youth is fain
To fly with thee, false as thou.—
My heart each day desires the morrow;
Sleep itself is turned to sorrow;
Vainly would my winter borrow
Sunny leaves from any bough.

III

Lilies for a bridal bed—
Roses for a matron's head—
Violets for a maiden dead—
Pansies let *my* flowers be:
On the living grave I bear
Scatter them without a tear—
Let no friend, however dear,
Waste one hope, one fear for me.

ADONAIIS

I

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!
O, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow, say: ‘With me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!’

II

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,
’Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corse
beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of Death.

III

Oh, weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend;—oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our
despair.

IV

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania!—He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among the sons of
light.

V

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of
time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or god,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's
serene abode.

VI

But now, thy youngest, dearest one, has perished—
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true-love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals nipped before they blew
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

VII

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest
breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

VIII

He will awake no more, oh, never more!—
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain
draw.

IX

Oh, weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams,
The passion-wingèd Ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living
streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn
their lot

Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet
pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home
again.

X

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold
head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and
cries;
'Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain.'
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

XI

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

XII

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw the
breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath

With lightning and with music: the damp death
 Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
 And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
 Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night
 clips,
 It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its
 eclipse.

XIII

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations,
 Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
 Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incar-
 nations
 Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;
 And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
 And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
 Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
 Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might
 seem
 Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

XIV

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
 From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet
 sound,
 Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
 Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
 Wet with the tears which should adorn the
 ground,
 Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
 Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
 Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
 And the wild Winds flew round, sobbing in their
 dismay.

XV

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green
spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen
hear.

XVI

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw
down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phoebus was not Hyacinth so dear
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais: wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

XVII

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

XVIII

Ah, woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
 But grief returns with the revolving year;
 The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
 The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons'
 bier;

The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
 And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
 And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX

Through wood and stream and field and hill and
 Ocean

A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst
 As it has ever done, with change and motion,
 From the great morning of the world when first
 God dawned on Chaos; in its stream immersed,
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
 All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
 Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight,
 The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

XX

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit tender,
 Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
 Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
 Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
 And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath;
 Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which
 knows

Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
 By sightless lightning?—the intense atom glows
 A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must
borrow.

As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the mor-
row,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year
to sorrow.

XXII

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
'Wake thou,' cried Misery, 'childless Mother,
rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his, with tears and
sighs.'
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried: 'Arise!'
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour
sprung.

XXIII

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear

So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

XXIV

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and
steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp
than they,
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living Might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and Life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear
delight.
'Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!' cried Urania: her distress
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her
vain caress.

XXVI

'Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain

That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

XXVII

'O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh, where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere.
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

XXVIII

'The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures to the conqueror's banner true
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
When, like Apollo, from his golden bow
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

XXIX

'The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn ;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again ;
So is it in the world of living men :
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night.'

XXX

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds
came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent ;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow ; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And Love taught Grief to fall like music from his
tongue.

XXXI

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,
A phantom among men ; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell ; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actaeon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their
prey.

XXXII

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—
A Love in desolation masked ;—a Power
Girt round with weakness ;—it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour ;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow ;—even whilst we speak
Is it not broken ? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly : on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart
may break.

XXXIII

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue ;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it ; of that
crew
He came the last, neglected and apart ;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

XXXIV

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears ; well knew that gentle
band
Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow ; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured : ' Who art
thou ?'
He answered not, but with a sudden hand

Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—oh! that it
should be so!

XXXV

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed
one,
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh!
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown:
It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre un-
strung.

XXXVII

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow:

Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as
now.

XXXVIII

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now—
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall
flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the
same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of
shame.

XXXIX

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings.—*We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living
clay.

XL

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;

From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst
thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

XLII

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling
there,

All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's
light.

XLIV

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy
air.

XLV

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal
thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale,—his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

XLVI

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.

‘Thou art become as one of us,’ they cry,
 ‘It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
 Swung blind in unascended majesty,
 Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.
 Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our
 throng!’

XLVII

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh, come forth,
 Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
 Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;
 As from a centre, dart thy spirit’s light
 Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
 Sate the void circumference: then shrink
 Even to a point within our day and night;
 And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
 When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the
 brink.

XLVIII

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
 Oh, not of him, but of our joy: ’tis nought
 That ages, empires, and religions there
 Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
 For such as he can lend,—they borrow not
 Glory from those who made the world their prey;
 And he is gathered to the kings of thought
 Who waged contention with their time’s decay,
 And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
 The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
 And where its wrecks like shattered mountains
 rise,
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress

The bones of Desolation's nakedness
Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread ;

L

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand ;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilions the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble ; and beneath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of
death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished
breath.

LI

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each ; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou ! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become ?

LII

The One remains, the many change and pass ;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows
fly ;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,

Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost
seek!

Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my
Heart?

Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near:
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join to-
gether.

LIV

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;

The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of
Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN PROFANED

I

ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it;
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

II

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not,—
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

SPRING

THE blasts of Autumn drive the wingèd seeds
Over the earth,—next come the snows, and rain,
And frosts, and storms, which dreary Winter
leads
Out of his Scythian cave, a savage train;

Behold! Spring sweeps over the world again,
Shedding soft dews from her ethereal wings;
Flowers on the mountains, fruits over the plain,
And music on the waves and woods she flings,
And love on all that lives, and calm on lifeless things.

O Spring, of hope, and love, and youth, and glad-
ness

Wind-wingèd emblem! brightest, best and
fairest!

Whence comest thou, when, with dark Winter's
sadness

The tears that fade in sunny smiles thou
sharest?

Sister of joy, thou art the child who wearest
Thy mother's dying smile, tender and sweet;
Thy mother Autumn, for whose grave thou
bearest

Fresh flowers, and beams like flowers, with gentle
feet,
Disturbing not the leaves which are her winding-
sheet.

Virtue, and Hope, and Love, like light and
Heaven,

Surround the world.—We are their chosen
slaves.

Has not the whirlwind of our spirit driven
Truth's deathless germs to thought's remotest
caves?

Lo, Winter comes!—the grief of many graves,
The frost of death, the tempest of the sword,
The flood of tyranny, whose sanguine waves
Stagnate like ice at Faith the enchanter's word,
And bind all human hearts in its repose abhorred.

The seeds are sleeping in the soil: meanwhile
The Tyrant peoples dungeons with his prey,
Pale victims on the guarded scaffold smile
Because they cannot speak; and, day by day,
The moon of wasting Science wanes away
Among her stars, and in that darkness vast
The sons of earth to their foul idols pray,
And grey Priests triumph, and like blight or
blast
A shade of selfish care o'er human looks is cast.

This is the winter of the world;—and here
We die, even as the winds of Autumn fade,
Expiring in the frore and foggy air.—
Behold! Spring comes, though we must pass,
who made
The promise of its birth,—even as the shade
Which from our death, as from a mountain,
flings
The future, a broad sunrise; thus arrayed
As with the plumes of overshadowing wings,
From its dark gulf of chains, Earth like an eagle
springs.

The Revolt of Islam, Canto ix.

SONG

I

RARELY, rarely, comest thou;
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'Tis since thou art fled away.

II

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

III

As a lizard with the shade
Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;
Even the sighs of grief
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

IV

Let me set my mournful ditty
To a merry measure;
Thou wilt never come for pity,
Thou wilt come for pleasure;
Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

V

I love all that thou lovest,
Spirit of Delight!
The fresh Earth in new leaves dressed,
And the starry night;
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

VI

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost;
I love waves, and winds, and storms,
Everything almost

Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

VII

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise, and good
Between thee and me
What difference? but thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

VIII

I love Love—though he has wings,
And like light can flee,
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life! Oh, come,
Make once more my heart thy home.

TIME

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality,
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

A LAMENT

I

O WORLD! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—Oh, never more!

II

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—Oh, never more!

FROM 'PROMETHEUS UNBOUND'

Demogorgon.

THOU, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul,
Sphere of divinest shapes and harmonies,
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost roll
The love which paves thy path along the skies:

The Earth.

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that dies.

Demogorgon.

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly Earth
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the swift birth
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, harmony:

The Moon.

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee!

Demogorgon.

Ye Kings of suns and stars, Daemons and Gods,
Aethereal Dominations, who possess
Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness:

A Voice from above.

Our great Republic hears, we are blest, and bless.

Demogorgon.

Ye happy Dead, whom beams of brightest verse
Are clouds to hide, not colours to portray,
Whether your nature is that universe
Which once ye saw and suffered—

A Voice from beneath.

Or as they
Whom we have left, we change and pass away.

Demogorgon.

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes
From man's high mind even to the central stone
Of sullen lead: from heaven's star-fretted domes
To the dull weed some sea-worm battens on:

A confused Voice.

We hear: the words waken Oblivion.

Demogorgon.

Spirits, whose homes are flesh: ye beasts and birds,
Ye worms and fish; ye living leaves and buds;
Lightning and wind; and ye untameable herds,
Meteors and mists, which throng earth's solitudes:—

A Voice.

Thy voice to us is wind among still woods.

Demogorgon.

Man, who wert once a despot and a slave;
A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;
A traveller from the cradle to the grave
Through the dim night of this immortal day:

All.

Speak: thy strong words may never pass away.

Demogorgon.

This is the day, which down the void abysm
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for Heaven's despotism.

And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep:

Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dread endurance, from the slippery, steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,
These are the seals of that most firm assurance

Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free

The serpent that would clasp her with his length;
These are the spells by which to reassume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;

To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
 To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
 From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

Prometheus Unbound, Act IV.

ALASTOR

OR THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE

EARTH, ocean, air, belovèd brotherhood!
 If our great Mother has imbued my soul
 With aught of natural piety to feel
 Your love, and recompense the boon with mine;
 If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and even,
 With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,
 And solemn midnight's tingling silentness;
 If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere wood,
 And winter robing with pure snow and crowns
 Of starry ice the grey grass and bare boughs;
 If spring's voluptuous pantings when she breathes
 Her first sweet kisses, have been dear to me;
 If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast
 I consciously have injured, but still loved
 And cherished these my kindred; then forgive
 This boast, belovèd brethren, and withdraw
 No portion of your wonted favour now!

Mother of this unfathomable world!
 Favour my solemn song, for I have loved
 Thee ever, and thee only; I have watched
 Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy steps,
 And my heart ever gazes on the depth

Of thy deep mysteries. I have made my bed
In charnels and on coffins, where black death
Keeps record of the trophies won from thee,
Hoping to still these obstinate questionings
Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost
Thy messenger, to render up the tale
Of what we are. In lone and silent hours,
When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness,
Like an inspired and desperate alchymist
Staking his very life on some dark hope,
Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks
With my most innocent love, until strange tears
Uniting with those breathless kisses, made
Such magic as compels the charmed night
To render up thy charge: . . . and, though ne'er yet
Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanctuary,
Enough from incommunicable dream,
And twilight phantasms, and deep noon-day
thought,
Has shone within me, that serenely now
And moveless, as a long-forgotten lyre
Suspended in the solitary dome
Of some mysterious and deserted fane,
I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that my strain
May modulate with murmurs of the air
And motions of the forests and the sea,
And voice of living beings, and woven hymns
Of night and day, and the deep heart of man.

There was a Poet whose untimely tomb
No human hands with pious reverence reared,
But the charmed eddies of autumnal winds
Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyramid
Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilderness:—

A lovely youth,—no mourning maiden decked
With weeping flowers, or votive cypress wreath,
The lone couch of his everlasting sleep:—
Gentle, and brave, and generous,—no lorn bard
Breathed o'er his dark fate one melodious sigh:
He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude.
Strangers have wept to hear his passionate notes,
And virgins, as unknown he passed, have pined
And wasted for fond love of his wild eyes.
The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to burn,
And Silence, too enamoured of that voice,
Locks its mute music in her rugged cell.

By solemn vision, and bright silver dream,
His infancy was nurtured. Every sight
And sound from the vast earth and ambient air,
Sent to his heart its choicest impulses.
The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips, and all of great,
Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past
In truth or fable consecrates, he felt
And knew. When early youth had passed, he left
His cold fireside and alienated home
To seek strange truths in undiscovered lands.
Many a wide waste and tangled wilderness
Has lured his fearless steps; and he has bought
With his sweet voice and eyes, from savage men,
His rest and food. Nature's most secret steps
He like her shadow has pursued, where'er
The red volcano overcanopies
Its fields of snow and pinnacles of ice
With burning smoke, or where bitumen lakes
On black bare pointed islets ever beat
With sluggish surge, or where the secret caves

Rugged and dark, winding among the springs
Of fire and poison, inaccessible
To avarice or pride, their starry domes
Of diamond and of gold expand above
Numberless and immeasurable halls,
Frequent with crystal column, and clear shrines
Of pearl, and thrones radiant with chrysolite.
Nor had that scene of ampler majesty
Than gems or gold, the varying roof of heaven
And the green earth lost in his heart its claims
To love and wonder; he would linger long
In lonesome vales, making the wild his home,
Until the doves and squirrels would partake
From his innocuous hand his bloodless food,
Lured by the gentle meaning of his looks,
And the wild antelope, that starts whene'er
The dry leaf rustles in the brake, suspend
Her timid steps to gaze upon a form
More graceful than her own.

His wandering step,

Obedient to high thoughts, has visited
The awful ruins of the days of old:
Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the waste
Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers
Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,
Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoe'er of strange
Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,
Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphynx,
Dark Aethiopia in her desert hills
Conceals. Among the ruined temples there,
Stupendous columns, and wild images
Of more than man, where marble daemons watch
The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead men
Hang their mute thoughts on the mute walls around,

He lingered, poring on memorials
Of the world's youth, through the long burning day
Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor, when the
Moon

Filled the mysterious halls with floating shades
Suspended he that task, but ever gazed
And gazed, till meaning on his vacant mind
Flashed like strong inspiration, and he saw
The thrilling secrets of the birth of time.

Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought his food,
Her daily portion, from her father's tent,
And spread her matting for his couch, and stole
From duties and repose to tend his steps:—
Enamoured, yet not daring for deep awe
To speak her love:—and watched his nightly sleep,
Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips
Parted in slumber, whence the regular breath
Of innocent dreams arose: then, when red morn
Made paler the pale moon, to her cold home
Wildered, and wan, and panting, she returned.

The Poet wandering on, through Arabie
And Persia, and the wild Carmanian waste,
And o'er the ærial mountains which pour down
Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,
In joy and exultation held his way;
Till in the vale of Cashmire, far within
Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants entwine
Beneath the hollow rocks a natural bower,
Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched
His languid limbs. A vision on his sleep
There came, a dream of hopes that never yet
Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed a veiled maid
Sate near him, talking in low solemn tones.

Her voice was like the voice of his own soul
Heard in the calm of thought; its music long,
Like woven sounds of streams and breezes, held
His inmost sense suspended in its web
Of many-coloured woof and shifting hues.
Knowledge and truth and virtue were her theme,
And lofty hopes of divine liberty,
Thoughts the most dear to him, and poesy,
Herself a poet. Soon the solemn mood
Of her pure mind kindled through all her frame
A permeating fire: wild numbers then
She raised, with voice stifled in tremulous sobs
Subdued by its own pathos: her fair hands
Were bare alone, sweeping from some strange harp
Strange symphony, and in their branching veins
The eloquent blood told an ineffable tale.
The beating of her heart was heard to fill
The pauses of her music, and her breath
Tumultuously accorded with those fits
Of intermitted song. Sudden she rose,
As if her heart impatiently endured
Its bursting burthen: at the sound he turned,
And saw by the warm light of their own life
Her glowing limbs beneath the sinuous veil
Of woven wind, her outspread arms now bare,
Her dark locks floating in the breath of night,
Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips
Outstretched, and pale, and quivering eagerly.
His strong heart sunk and sickened with excess
Of love. He reared his shuddering limbs and quelled
His gasping breath, and spread his arms to meet
Her panting bosom: . . . she drew back a while,
Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,
With frantic gesture and short breathless cry

Folded his frame in her dissolving arms.
Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and night
Involved and swallowed up the vision; sleep,
Like a dark flood suspended in its course,
Rolled back its impulse on his vacant brain.

Roused by the shock he started from his trance—
The cold white light of morning, the blue moon
Low in the west, the clear and garish hills,
The distinct valley and the vacant woods,
Spread round him where he stood. Whither have
fled

The hues of heaven that canopied his bower
Of yesternight? The sounds that soothed his sleep,
The mystery and the majesty of Earth,
The joy, the exultation? His wan eyes
Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly
As ocean's moon looks on the moon in heaven.
The spirit of sweet human love has sent
A vision to the sleep of him who spurned
Her choicest gifts. He eagerly pursues
Beyond the realms of dream that fleeting shade;
He overleaps the bounds. Alas! Alas!
Were limbs, and breath, and being intertwined
Thus treacherously? Lost, lost, for ever lost,
In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep,
That beautiful shape! Does the dark gate of death
Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,
O Sleep? Does the bright arch of rainbow clouds,
And pendent mountains seen in the calm lake,
Lead only to a black and watery depth,
While death's blue vault, with loathliest vapours
hung,
Where every shade which the foul grave exhales

Hides its dead eye from the detested day,
Conducts, O Sleep, to thy delightful realms?
This doubt with sudden tide flowed on his heart,
The insatiate hope which it awakened, stung
His brain even like despair.

While daylight held
The sky, the Poet kept mute conference
With his still soul. At night the passion came,
Like the fierce fiend of a distempered dream,
And shook him from his rest, and led him forth
Into the darkness.—As an eagle grasped
In folds of the green serpent, feels her breast
Burn with the poison, and precipitates
Through night and day, tempest, and calm, and
cloud,
Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind flight
O'er the wide æëry wilderness: thus driven
By the bright shadow of that lovely dream,
Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,
Through tangled swamps and deep precipitous dells,
Startling with careless step the moonlight snake,
He fled. Red morning dawned upon his flight,
Shedding the mockery of its vital hues
Upon his cheek of death. He wandered on
Till vast Aornos seen from Petra's steep
Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud;
Through Balk, and where the desolated tombs
Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind
Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered on,
Day after day a weary waste of hours,
Bearing within his life the brooding care
That ever fed on its decaying flame.
And now his limbs were lean; his scattered hair
Sered by the autumn of strange suffering

Sung dirges in the wind ; his listless hand
Hung like dead bone within its withered skin ;
Life, and the lustre that consumed it, shone
As in a furnace burning secretly
From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,
Who ministered with human charity
His human wants, beheld with wondering awe
Their fleeting visitant. The mountaineer,
Encountering on some dizzy precipice
That spectral form, deemed that the Spirit of wind
With lightning eyes, and eager breath, and feet
Disturbing not the drifted snow, had paused
In its career: the infant would conceal
His troubled visage in his mother's robe
In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,
To remember their strange light in many a dream
Of after-times ; but youthful maidens, taught
By nature, would interpret half the woe
That wasted him, would call him with false names
Brother, and friend, would press his pallid hand
At parting, and watch, dim through tears, the path
Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasman shore
He paused, a wide and melancholy waste
Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse urged
His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was there,
Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.
It rose as he approached, and with strong wings
Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright course
High over the immeasurable main.
His eyes pursued its flight.—'Thou hast a home,
Beautiful bird ; thou voyagest to thine home,
Where thy sweet mate will twine her downy neck

With thine, and welcome thy return with eyes
Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.
And what am I that I should linger here,
With voice far sweeter than thy dying notes,
Spirit more vast than thine, frame more attuned
To beauty, wasting these surpassing powers
In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and heaven
That echoes not my thoughts?' A gloomy smile
Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering lips.
For sleep, he knew, kept most relentlessly
Its precious charge, and silent death exposed,
Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy lure,
With doubtful smile mocking its own strange
 charms.

Startled by his own thoughts he looked around.
There was no fair fiend near him, not a sight
Or sound of awe but in his own deep mind.
A little shallop floating near the shore
Caught the impatient wandering of his gaze.
It had been long abandoned, for its sides
Gaped wide with many a rift, and its frail joints
Swayed with the undulations of the tide.
A restless impulse urged him to embark
And meet lone Death on the drear ocean's waste;
For well he knew that mighty Shadow loves
The slimy caverns of the populous deep.

The day was fair and sunny, sea and sky
Drank its inspiring radiance, and the wind
Swept strongly from the shore, blackening the
 waves.

Following his eager soul, the wanderer
Leaped in the boat, he spread his cloak aloft
On the bare mast, and took his lonely seat,

And felt the boat speed o'er the tranquil sea
Like a torn cloud before the hurricane,

As one that in a silver vision floats
Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds
Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly
Along the dark and ruffled waters fled
The straining boat.—A whirlwind swept it on;
With fierce gusts and precipitating force,
Through the white ridges of the chafèd sea.
The waves arose. Higher and higher still
Their fierce necks writhed beneath the tempest's
scourge

Like serpents struggling in a vulture's grasp.
Calm and rejoicing in the fearful war
Of wave ruining on wave, and blast on blast
Descending, and black flood on whirlpool driven
With dark obliterating course, he sate:
As if their genii were the ministers
Appointed to conduct him to the light
Of those belovèd eyes, the Poet sate
Holding the steady helm. Evening came on,
The beams of sunset hung their rainbow hues
High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted spray
That canopied his path o'er the waste deep;
Twilight, ascending slowly from the east,
Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided locks
O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of day;
Night followed, clad with stars. On every side
More horribly the multitudinous streams
Of ocean's mountainous waste to mutual war
Rushed in dark tumult thundering, as to mock
The calm and spangled sky. The little boat
Still fled before the storm; still fled, like foam

Down the steep cataract of a wintry river ;
Now pausing on the edge of the riven wave ;
Now leaving far behind the bursting mass
That fell, convulsing ocean: safely fled—
As if that frail and wasted human form,
Had been an elemental god.

At midnight

The moon arose: and lo! the ethereal cliffs
Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone
Among the stars like sunlight, and around
Whose caverned base the whirlpools and the waves
Bursting and eddying irresistibly
Rage and resound for ever.—Who shall save?—
The boat fled on,—the boiling torrent drove,—
The crags closed round with black and jagged arms,
The shattered mountain overhung the sea,
And faster still, beyond all human speed,
Suspended on the sweep of the smooth wave,
The little boat was driven. A cavern there
Yawned, and amid its slant and winding depths
Ingulfed the rushing sea. The boat fled on
With unrelaxing speed.—‘Vision and Love!’
The Poet cried aloud, ‘I have beheld
The path of thy departure. Sleep and death
Shall not divide us long!’

The boat pursued

The windings of the cavern. Daylight shone
At length upon that gloomy river’s flow ;
Now, where the fiercest war among the waves
Is calm, on the unfathomable stream
The boat moved slowly. Where the mountain, riven,
Exposed those black depths to the azure sky,
Ere yet the flood’s enormous volume fell

Even to the base of Caucasus, with sound
That shook the everlasting rocks, the mass
Filled with one whirlpool all that ample chasm;
Stair above stair the eddying waters rose,
Circling immeasurably fast, and laved
With alternating dash the gnarlèd roots
Of mighty trees, that stretched their giant arms
In darkness over it. I' the midst was left,
Reflecting, yet distorting every cloud,
A pool of treacherous and tremendous calm.
Seized by the sway of the ascending stream,
With dizzy swiftness, round, and round, and round,
Ridge after ridge the straining boat arose,
Till on the verge of the extremest curve,
Where, through an opening of the rocky bank,
The waters overflow, and a smooth spot
Of glassy quiet mid those battling tides
Is left, the boat paused shuddering.—Shall it sink
Down the abyss? Shall the reverting stress
Of that resistless gulf embosom it?
Now shall it fall?—A wandering stream of wind,
Breathed from the west, has caught the expanded
sail,
And, lo! with gentle motion, between banks
Of mossy slope, and on a placid stream,
Beneath a woven grove it sails, and, hark!
The ghastly torrent mingles its far roar,
With the breeze murmuring in the musical woods.
Where the embowering trees recede, and leave
A little space of green expanse, the cove
Is closed by meeting banks, whose yellow flowers
For ever gaze on their own drooping eyes,
Reflected in the crystal calm. The wave
Of the boat's motion marred their pensive task,

Which nought but vagrant bird, or wanton wind,
Or falling spear-grass, or their own decay
Had e'er disturbed before. The Poet longed
To deck with their bright hues his withered hair,
But on his heart its solitude returned,
And he forbore. Not the strong impulse hid
In those flushed cheeks, bent eyes, and shadowy
frame

Had yet performed its ministry: it hung
Upon his life, as lightning in a cloud
Gleams, hovering ere it vanish, ere the floods
Of night close over it.

The noonday sun

Now shone upon the forest, one vast mass
Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence
A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge caves,
Scooped in the dark base of their aëry rocks
Mocking its moans, respond and roar for ever.
The meeting boughs and implicated leaves
Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as led
By love, or dream, or god, or mightier Death,
He sought in Nature's dearest haunt, some bank,
Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More dark
And dark the shades accumulate. The oak,
Expanding its immense and knotty arms,
Embraces the light beech. The pyramids
Of the tall cedar overarching, frame
Most solemn domes within, and far below,
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,
The ash and the acacia floating hang
Tremulous and pale. Like restless serpents, clothed
In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,
Starred with ten thousand blossoms, flow around
The grey trunks, and, as gamesome infants' eyes

With gentle meanings, and most innocent wiles,
Fold their beams round the hearts of those that love,
These twine their tendrils with the wedded boughs
Uniting their close union; the woven leaves
Make net-work of the dark blue light of day,
And the night's noontide clearness, mutable
As shapes in the weird clouds. Soft mossy lawns
Beneath these canopies extend their swells,
Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed with
 blooms

Minute yet beautiful. One darkest glen
Sends from its woods of musk-rose, twined with
 jasmine,

A soul-dissolving odour, to invite
To some more lovely mystery. Through the dell,
Silence and Twilight here, twin-sisters, keep
Their noonday watch, and sail among the shades,
Like vaporous shapes half seen; beyond, a well,
Dark gleaming, and of most translucent wave,
Images all the woven boughs above,
And each depending leaf, and every speck
Of azure sky, darting between their chasms;
Nor aught else in the liquid mirror laves
Its portraiture, but some inconstant star
Between one foliaged lattice twinkling fair,
Or painted bird, sleeping beneath the moon,
Or gorgeous insect floating motionless,
Unconscious of the day, ere yet his wings
Have spread their glories to the gaze of noon.

Hither the Poet came. His eyes beheld
Their own wan light through the reflected lines
Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark depth
Of that still fountain; as the human heart,

Gazing in dreams over the gloomy grave,
Sees its own treacherous likeness there. He heard
The motion of the leaves, the grass that sprung
Startled and glanced and trembled even to feel
An unaccustomed presence, and the sound
Of the sweet brook that from the secret springs
Of that dark fountain rose. A Spirit seemed
To stand beside him—clothed in no bright robes
Of shadowy silver or enshrining light,
Borrowed from aught the visible world affords
Of grace, or majesty, or mystery;—
But, undulating woods, and silent well,
And leaping rivulet, and evening gloom
Now deepening the dark shades, for speech as-
suming,
Held commune with him, as if he and it
Were all that was,—only . . . when his regard
Was raised by intense pensiveness, . . . two eyes,
Two starry eyes, hung in the gloom of thought,
And seemed with their serene and azure smiles
To beckon him.

Obedient to the light

That shone within his soul, he went, pursuing
The windings of the dell.—The rivulet
Wanton and wild, through many a green ravine
Beneath the forest flowed. Sometimes it fell
Among the moss with hollow harmony
Dark and profound. Now on the polished stones
It danced; like childhood laughing as it went:
Then, through the plain in tranquil wanderings
crept,
Reflecting every herb and drooping bud
That overhung its quietness.—‘O stream!

Whose source is inaccessibly profound,
Whither do thy mysterious waters tend?
Thou imagest my life. Thy darksome stillness,
Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and hollow gulfs,
Thy searchless fountain, and invisible course
Have each their type in me: and the wide sky,
And measureless ocean may declare as soon
What oozy cavern or what wandering cloud
Contains thy waters, as the universe
Tell where these living thoughts reside, when
 stretched
Upon thy flowers my bloodless limbs shall waste
I' the passing wind!'

 Beside the grassy shore
Of the small stream he went; he did impress
On the green moss his tremulous step, that caught
Strong shuddering from his burning limbs. As one
Roused by some joyous madness from the couch
Of fever, he did move; yet, not like him,
Forgetful of the grave, where, when the flame
Of his frail exultation shall be spent,
He must descend. With rapid steps he went
Beneath the shade of trees, beside the flow
Of the wild babbling rivulet; and now
The forest's solemn canopies were changed
For the uniform and lightsome evening sky.
Grey rocks did peep from the spare moss, and
 stemmed
The struggling brook: tall spires of windlestrae
Threw their thin shadows down the rugged slope,
And nought but gnarled roots of ancient pines
Branchless and blasted, clenched with grasping roots
The unwilling soil. A gradual change was here,

Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow away,
The smooth brow gathers, and the hair grows thin
And white, and where irradiate dewy eyes
Had shone, gleam stony orbs:—so from his steps
Bright flowers departed, and the beautiful shade
Of the green groves, with all their odorous winds
And musical motions. Calm, he still pursued
The stream, that with a larger volume now
Rolled through the labyrinthine dell; and there
Fretted a path through its descending curves
With its wintry speed. On every side now rose
Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,
Lifted their black and barren pinnacles
In the light of evening, and, its precipice
Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,
Mid toppling stones, black gulfs and yawning caves,
Whose windings gave ten thousand various tongues
To the loud stream. Lo! where the pass expands
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,
And seems, with its accumulated crags,
To overhang the world: for wide expand
Beneath the wan stars and descending moon
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,
Dim tracts and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom
Of leaden-coloured even, and fiery hills
Mingling their flames with twilight, on the verge
Of the remote horizon. The near scene,
In naked and severe simplicity,
Made contrast with the universe. A pine,
Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the vacancy
Its swinging boughs, to each inconstant blast
Yielding one only response, at each pause
In most familiar cadence, with the howl
The thunder and the hiss of homeless streams

Mingling its solemn song, whilst the broad river,
Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged path,
Fell into that immeasurable void
Scattering its waters to the passing winds.

Yet the grey precipice and solemn pine
And torrent, were not all;—one silent nook
Was there. Even on the edge of that vast mountain,
Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks,
It overlooked in its serenity
The dark earth, and the bending vault of stars.
It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to smile
Even in the lap of horror. Ivy clasped
The fissured stones with its entwining arms,
And did embower with leaves for ever green,
And berries dark, the smooth and even space
Of its inviolated floor, and here
The children of the autumnal whirlwind bore,
In wanton sport, those bright leaves, whose decay,
Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,
Rivals the pride of summer. 'Tis the haunt
Of every gentle wind, whose breath can teach
The wilds to love tranquillity. One step,
One human step alone, has ever broken
The stillness of its solitude:—one voice
Alone inspired its echoes;—even that voice
Which hither came, floating among the winds,
And led the loveliest among human forms
To make their wild haunts the depository
Of all the grace and beauty that endued
Its motions, render up its majesty,
Scatter its music on the unfeeling storm,
And to the damp leaves and blue cavern mould,
Nurses of rainbow flowers and branching moss,

Commit the colours of that varying cheek,
That snowy breast, those dark and drooping eyes.

The dim and hornèd moon hung low, and poured
A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge
That overflowed its mountains. Yellow mist
Filled the unbounded atmosphere, and drank
Wan moonlight even to fulness: not a star
Shone, not a sound was heard; the very winds,
Danger's grim playmates, on that precipice
Slept, clasped in his embrace.—O, storm of death!
Whose sightless speed divides this sullen night:
And thou, colossal Skeleton, that, still
Guiding its irresistible career
In thy devastating omnipotence,
Art king of this frail world, from the red field
Of slaughter, from the reeking hospital,
The patriot's sacred couch, the snowy bed
Of innocence, the scaffold and the throne,
A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin calls
His brother Death. A rare and regal prey
He hath prepared, prowling around the world;
Glutted with which thou mayst repose, and men
Go to their graves like flowers or creeping worms.
Nor ever more offer at thy dark shrine
The unheeded tribute of a broken heart.

When on the threshold of the green recess
The wanderer's footsteps fell, he knew that death
Was on him. Yet a little, ere it fled,
Did he resign his high and holy soul
To images of the majestic past,
That paused within his passive being now,
Like winds that bear sweet music, when they breathe

Through some dim latticed chamber. He did place
His pale lean hand upon the rugged trunk
Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone
Reclined his languid head, his limbs did rest,
Diffused and motionless, on the smooth brink
Of that obscurest chasm;—and thus he lay,
Surrendering to their final impulses
The hovering powers of life. Hope and despair,
The torturers, slept; no mortal pain or fear
Marred his repose, the influxes of sense,
And his own being unalloyed by pain,
Yet feebler and more feeble, calmly fed
The stream of thought, till he lay breathing there
At peace, and faintly smiling:—his last sight
Was the great moon, which o'er the western line
Of the wide world her mighty horn suspended,
With whose dun beams inwoven darkness seemed
To mingle. Now upon the jagged hills
It rests, and still as the divided frame
Of the vast meteor sunk, the Poet's blood,
That ever beat in mystic sympathy
With nature's ebb and flow, grew feebler still:
And when two lessening points of light alone
Gleamed through the darkness, the alternate gasp
Of his faint respiration scarce did stir
The stagnate night:—till the minutest ray
Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered in his heart.
It paused—it fluttered. But when heaven remained
Utterly black, the murky shades involved
An image, silent, cold, and motionless,
As their own voiceless earth and vacant air.
Even as a vapour fed with golden beams
That ministered on sunlight, ere the west
Eclipses it, was now that wondrous frame—

No sense, no motion, no divinity—
A fragile lute, on whose harmonious strings
The breath of heaven did wander—a bright stream
Once fed with many-voicèd waves—a dream
Of youth, which night and time have quenched for
ever,
Still, dark, and dry, and unremembered now.

O, for Medea's wondrous alchemy,
Which wheresoe'er it fell made the earth gleam
With bright flowers, and the wintry boughs exhale
From vernal blooms fresh fragrance! O, that God,
Profuse of poisons, would concede the chalice
Which but one living man has drained, who now,
Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that feels
No proud exemption in the blighting curse
He bears, over the world wanders for ever,
Lone as incarnate death! O, that the dream
Of dark magician in his visioned cave,
Raking the cinders of a crucible
For life and power, even when his feeble hand
Shakes in its last decay, were the true law
Of this so lovely world! But thou art fled
Like some frail exhalation; which the dawn
Robes in its golden beams,—ah! thou hast fled!
The brave, the gentle, and the beautiful,
The child of grace and genius. Heartless things
Are done and said i' the world, and many worms
And beasts and men live on, and mighty Earth
From sea and mountain, city and wilderness,
In vesper low or joyous orison,
Lifts still its solemn voice:—but thou art fled—
Thou canst no longer know or love the shapes
Of this phantasmal scene, who have to thee
Been purest ministers, who are, alas!

Now thou art not. Upon those pallid lips
So sweet even in their silence, on those eyes
That image sleep in death, upon that form
Yet safe from the worm's outrage, let no tear
Be shed—not even in thought. Nor, when those
hues

Are gone, and those divinest lineaments,
Worn by the senseless wind, shall live alone
In the frail pauses of this simple strain,
Let not high verse, mourning the memory
Of that which is no more, or painting's woe
Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery
Their own cold powers. Art and eloquence,
And all the shows o' the world are frail and vain
To weep a loss that turns their lights to shade.
It is a woe too 'deep for tears,' when all
Is reft at once, when some surpassing Spirit,
Whose light adorned the world around it, leaves
Those who remain behind, not sobs or groans,
The passionate tumult of a clinging hope;
But pale despair and cold tranquillity,
Nature's vast frame, the web of human things,
Birth and the grave, that are not as they were.

FREDERICK MARRYAT

1792–1848

THE OLD NAVY

THE captain stood on the carronade: 'First lieutenant,' says he,
'Send all my merry men aft here, for they must list
to me;
I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons—because I'm
bred to the sea;

That ship there is a Frenchman, who means to fight with we.

And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as
I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've
gained the victory!

That ship there is a Frenchman, and if we don't take *she*,

'Tis a thousand bullets to one, that she will capture *we*;

I haven't the gift of the gab, my boys; so each man to his gun;

If she's not mine in half an hour, I'll flog each mother's son.

For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as
I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've
gained the victory!

We fought for twenty minutes, when the Frenchman had enough;

'I little thought,' said he, 'that your men were of such stuff;'

Our captain took the Frenchman's sword, a low bow made to *he*;

'I haven't the gift of the gab, monsieur, but polite I wish to be.

And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as
I've been to sea,

I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've
gained the victory!

Our captain sent for all of us: 'My merry men,' said he, 'I haven't the gift of the gab, my lads, but yet I thankful be:

You've done your duty handsomely, each man
stood to his gun;

If you hadn't, you villains, as sure as day, I'd have
flogged each mother's son.

For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, as long
as I'm at sea,

I'll fight 'gainst every odds—and I'll gain
the victory!

The Dog Fiend.

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS

1793–1835

DIRGE

CALM on the bosom of thy God,

Fair spirit, rest thee now!

E'en while with ours thy footsteps trod,

His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!

Soul, to its place on high!

They that have seen thy look in death

No more may fear to die.

JOHN CLARE

1793–1864

WRITTEN IN NORTHAMPTON COUNTY ASYLUM

I AM! yet what I am who cares, or knows?

My friends forsake me like a memory lost.

I am the self-consumer of my woes;

They rise and vanish, an oblivious host,

Shadows of life, whose very soul is lost.

And yet I am—I live—though I am tossed

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dream,
Where there is neither sense of life, nor joys,
But the huge shipwreck of my own esteem
And all that's dear. Even those I loved the best
Are strange—nay, they are stranger than the rest.
I long for scenes where man has never trod—
For scenes where woman never smiled or wept—
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,
Full of high thoughts, unborn. So let me lie,—
The grass below; above, the vaulted sky.

NOON

ALL how silent and how still;
Nothing heard but yonder mill:
While the dazzled eye surveys
All around a liquid blaze;
And amid the scorching gleams;
If we earnest look, it seems
As if crooked bits of glass
Seemed repeatedly to pass.
Oh, for a puffing breeze to blow!
But breezes are all strangers now;
Not a twig is seen to shake,
Nor the smallest bent to quake;
From the river's muddy side
Not a curve is seen to glide;
And no longer on the stream
Watching lies the silver bream,
Forcing, from repeated springs,
'Verges in successive rings.'
Bees are faint, and cease to hum;
Birds are overpowered and dumb.

Rural voices all are mute,
 Tuneless lie the pipe and flute:
 Shepherds, with their panting sheep,
 In the swaliest corner creep;
 And from the tormenting heat
 All are wishing to retreat.
 Huddled up in grass and flowers,
 Mowers wait for cooler hours;
 And the cow-boy seeks the sedge,
 Ramping in the woodland hedge,
 While his cattle o'er the vales
 Scamper, with uplifted tails;

* * * * *

E'en the dew is parchéd up
 From the teasel's jointed cup:
 O poor birds! where must ye fly,
 Now your water-pots are dry?
 If ye stay upon the heath,
 Ye'll be choked and clammed to death.
 Therefore leave the shadeless goss,
 Seek the spring-head lined with moss;
 There your little feet may stand,
 Safely printing on the sand;
 While, in full possession, where
 Purling eddies ripple clear,
 You with ease and plenty blest,
 Sip the coolest and the best.
 Then away! and wet your throats;
 Cheer me with your warbling notes;
 'Twill hot noon the more revive;
 While I wander to contrive
 For myself a place as good,
 In the middle of a wood:

swaliest] shadiest.

There aside some mossy bank,
Where the grass in bunches rank
Lifts its down on spindles high,
Shall be where I'll choose to lie;
Fearless of the things that creep,
There I'll think, and there I'll sleep;
Caring not to stir at all,
Till the dew begins to fall.

AFTER READING IN A LETTER PROPOSALS
FOR BUILDING A COTTAGE

BESIDE a runnel build my shed,
With stubbles covered o'er;
Let broad oaks o'er its chimney spread,
And grass-plats grace the door.

The door may open with a string,
So that it closes tight;
And locks would be a wanted thing,
To keep out thieves at night.

A little garden, not too fine,
Inclose with painted pales;
And woodbines, round the cot to twine,
Pin to the wall with nails.

Let hazels grow, and spindling sedge,
Bend bowering over-head;
Dig old man's beard from woodland hedge,
To twine a summer shade.

Beside the threshold sods provide,
And build a summer seat;
Plant sweet-briar bushes by its side,
And flowers that blossom sweet.

I love the sparrow's ways to watch
Upon the cotter's sheds,
So here and there pull out the thatch,
That they may hide their heads.

And as the sweeping swallows stop
Their flights along the green,
Leave holes within the chimney-top
To paste their nest between.

Stick shelves and cupboards round the hut,
In all the holes and nooks;
Nor in the corner fail to put
A cupboard for the books.

Along the floor some sand I'll shift,
To make it fit to live in;
And then I'll thank ye for the gift,
As something worth the giving.

SUDDEN SHOWER

BLACK grows the sudden sky, betokening rain,
And humming hive-bees homeward hurry by:
They feel the change; so let us shun the grain,
And take the broad road while our feet are dry.
Aye there, some drops fell moistening on my face,
And pattering on my hat—'tis coming nigh!—
Let's look about, and find a sheltering place.

The little things around us fear the sky,
And hasten through the grass to shun the shower.
Here stoops an ash-tree—hark! the wind gets
high,

But never mind; this ivy, for an hour,
Rain as it may, will keep us drily here:
That little wren knows well his sheltering bower,
Nor leaves his covert, though we come so near.

FROM 'THE FLITTING'

I've left my own old home of homes,
Green fields and every pleasant place;
The summer like a stranger comes,
I pause and hardly know her face.
I miss the hazel's happy green,
The bluebell's quiet hanging blooms,
Where envy's sneer was never seen,
Where staring malice never comes.

I miss the heath, its yellow furze,
Molehills and rabbit tracks that lead
Through beesom, ling, and teasel burrs
That spread a wilderness indeed;
The woodland oaks and all below
That their white powdered branches shield,
The mossy paths: the very crow
Croaked music in my native fields.

I sit me in my corner chair
That seems to feel itself at home,
And hear bird music here and there
From hawthorn hedge and orchard come.
I hear, but all is strange and new:
I sat on my old bench in June,
The sailing puddock's shrill 'peelew'
On Royce Wood seemed a sweeter tune.

I walk adown the narrow lane,
The nightingale is singing now,
But like to me she seems at loss
For Royce Wood and its shielding bough.
I lean upon the window sill,
The bees and summer happy seem;
Green, sunny green they shine, but still
My heart goes far away to dream

Of happiness, and thoughts arise
With home-bred pictures many a one,
Green lanes that shut out burning skies
And old crooked stiles to rest upon;
Above them hangs the maple tree,
Below grass swells a velvet hill,
And little footpaths sweet to see
Go seeking sweeter places still.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

1794-1878

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

MERRILY swinging on briar and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gaily drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him call in his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can.
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice, good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;

This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air,
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain;
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

TO A WATERFOWL

WHITHER, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere;
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

JOHN KEATS

1795-1821

I STOOD TIPTOE UPON A LITTLE HILL

Places of nestling green for poets made.

Story of Rimini.

I STOOD tiptoe upon a little hill,
 The air was cooling, and so very still,
 That the sweet buds which with a modest pride
 Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,
 Their scanty-leaved, and finely-tapering stems,
 Had not yet lost their starry diadems
 Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.
 The clouds were pure and white as flocks new-shorn,
 And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly they slept
 On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept
 A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
 Born of the very sigh that silence heaves;
 For not the faintest motion could be seen
 Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.
 There was wide wandering for the greediest eye,
 To peer about upon variety;
 Far round the horizon's crystal air to skim,
 And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim;
 To picture out the quaint and curious bending
 Of a fresh woodland alley never-ending:
 Or by the bowery clefts, and leafy shelves,
 Guess where the jaunty streams refresh themselves.
 I gazed awhile, and felt as light and free
 As though the fanning wings of Mercury
 Had played upon my heels: I was light-hearted,
 And many pleasures to my vision started;
 So I straightway began to pluck a posy
 Of luxuries bright, milky, soft, and rosy.

A bush of May-flowers with the bees about them;
Ah, sure no tasteful nook could be without them!
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,
And let long grass grow round the roots, to keep
them

Moist, cool, and green; and shade the violets,
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.

A filbert hedge with wildbriar overtwined,
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind
Upon their summer thrones; there too should be
The frequent chequer of a youngling tree,
That with a score of light green brethren shoots
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots:
Round which is heard a spring-head of clear waters,
Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters,
The spreading blue-bells: it may haply mourn
That such fair clusters should be rudely torn
From their fresh beds, and scattered thoughtlessly
By infant hands, left on the path to die.

Open afresh your round of starry folds,
Ye ardent marigolds!
Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,
For great Apollo bids
That in these days your praises should be sung
On many harps, which he has lately strung;
And when again your dewiness he kisses,
Tell him, I have you in my world of blisses:
So haply when I rove in some far vale,
His mighty voice may come upon the gale.

Here are sweet peas, on tiptoe for a flight
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white
And taper fingers catching at all things,
To bind them all about with tiny rings.

Linger awhile upon some bending planks
That lean against a streamlet's rushy banks,
And watch intently Nature's gentle doings:
They will be found softer than ringdoves' cooings.
How silent comes the water round that bend!
Not the minutest whisper does it send
To the o'erhanging sallows: blades of grass
Slowly across the chequered shadows pass.
Why, you might read two sonnets, ere they reach
To where the hurrying freshnesses aye preach
A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds;
Where swarms of minnows show their little heads,
Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the streams,
To taste the luxury of sunny beams
Tempered with coolness. How they ever wrestle
With their own sweet delight, and ever nestle
Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand!
If you but scantily hold out the hand,
That very instant not one will remain;
But turn your eye, and they are there again.
The ripples seem right glad to reach those cresses,
And cool themselves among the emerald tresses;
The while they cool themselves, they freshness give,
And moisture, that the bowery green may live:
So keeping up an interchange of favours,
Like good men in the truth of their behaviours.
Sometimes goldfinches one by one will drop
From low-hung branches: little space they stop
But sip, and twitter, and their feathers sleek;
Then off at once, as in a wanton freak:
Or perhaps, to show their black and golden wings,
Pausing upon their yellow flutterings.
Were I in such a place, I sure should pray
That nought less sweet might call my thoughts away,

Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown
Fanning away the dandelion's down;
Than the light music of her nimble toes
Patting against the sorrel as she goes.
How she would start, and blush, thus to be caught
Playing in all her innocence of thought!
O let me lead her gently o'er the brook,
Watch her half-smiling lips and downward look;
O let me for one moment touch her wrist;
Let me one moment to her breathing list;
And as she leaves me, may she often turn
Her fair eyes looking through her locks auburne.
What next? a tuft of evening primroses,
O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes;
O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,
But that 'tis ever startled by the leap
Of buds into ripe flowers; or by the flitting
Of divers moths; that aye their rest are quitting;
Or by the moon lifting her silver rim
Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim
Coming into the blue with all her light.
O maker of sweet poets! dear delight
Of this fair world and all its gentle livers;
Spangler of clouds, halo of crystal rivers,
Mingler with leaves, and dew and tumbling streams,
Closer of lovely eyes to lovely dreams,
Lover of loneliness, and wandering,
Of upcast eye, and tender pondering!
Thee must I praise above all other glories
That smile us on to tell delightful stories.
For what has made the sage or poet write
But the fair paradise of Nature's light?
In the calm grandeur of a sober line,
We see the waving of the mountain pine;

And when a tale is beautifully staid,
We feel the safety of a hawthorn glade:
When it is moving on luxurious wings,
The soul is lost in pleasant smotherings:
Fair dewy roses brush against our faces,
And flowering laurels spring from diamond vases;
O'erhead we see the jasmine and sweetbriar,
And bloomy grapes laughing from green attire;
While at our feet, the voice of crystal bubbles
Charms us at once away from all our troubles:
So that we feel uplifted from the world,
Walking upon the white clouds wreathed and
curled.

So felt he, who first told how Psyche went
On the smooth wind to realms of wonderment;
What Psyche felt, and Love, when their full lips
First touched; what amorous and fondling nips
They gave each other's cheeks; with all their sighs,
And how they kist each other's tremulous eyes:
The silver lamp,—the ravishment—the wonder—
The darkness—loneliness—the fearful thunder;
Their woes gone by, and both to heaven up-flown,
To bow for gratitude before Jove's throne.
So did he feel, who pulled the boughs aside,
That we might look into a forest wide,
To catch a glimpse of Fauns, and Dryades
Coming with softest rustle through the trees;
And garlands woven of flowers wild, and sweet,
Upheld on ivory wrists, or sporting feet:
Telling us how fair trembling Syrinx fled
Arcadian Pan, with such a fearful dread.
Poor Nymph,—poor Pan,—how did he weep to
find
Nought but a lovely sighing of the wind

Along the reedy stream! a half-heard strain,
Full of sweet desolation—balmy pain.

What first inspired a bard of old to sing
Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring?
In some delicious ramble, he had found
A little space, with boughs all woven round;
And in the midst of all, a clearer pool
Than e'er reflected in its pleasant cool
The blue sky, here and there serenely peeping,
Through tendril wreaths fantastically creeping.
And on the bank a lonely flower he spied,
A meek and forlorn flower, with nought of pride,
Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clearness,
To woo its own sad image into nearness:
Deaf to light Zephyrus, it would not move;
But still would seem to droop, to pine, to love.
So while the poet stood in this sweet spot,
Some fainter gleamings o'er his fancy shot;
Nor was it long ere he had told the tale
Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's bale.

Where had he been, from whose warm head out-
flew
That sweetest of all songs, that ever new,
That aye refreshing, pure deliciousness,
Coming ever to bless
The wanderer by moonlight? to him bringing
Shapes from the invisible world, unearthly singing
From out the middle air, from flowery nests,
And from the pillowy silkiness that rests
Full in the speculation of the stars.
Ah! surely he had burst our mortal bars;
Into some wondrous region he had gone,
To search for thee, divine Endymion!

He was a Poet, sure a lover too,
Who stood on Latmus' top, what time there blew
Soft breezes from the myrtle vale below:
And brought, in faintness solemn, sweet, and slow,
A hymn from Dian's temple; while upswelling,
The incense went to her own starry dwelling.
But though her face was clear as infants' eyes,
Though she stood smiling o'er the sacrifice,
The poet wept at her so piteous fate,
Wept that such beauty should be desolate:
So in fine wrath some golden sounds he won,
And gave meek Cynthia her Endymion.

Queen of the wide air; thou most lovely queen
Of all the brightness that mine eyes have seen!
As thou exceedest all things in thy shine,
So every tale, does this sweet tale of thine.
O for three words of honey, that I might
Tell but one wonder of thy bridal night!

Where distant ships do seem to show their keels,
Phoebus awhile delayed his mighty wheels,
And turned to smile upon thy bashful eyes,
Ere he his unseen pomp would solemnize.
The evening weather was so bright, and clear,
That men of health were of unusual cheer;
Stepping like Homer at the trumpet's call,
Or young Apollo on the pedestal:
And lovely women were as fair and warm
As Venus looking sideways in alarm.
The breezes were ethereal, and pure,
And crept through half-closed lattices to cure
The languid sick; it cooled their fevered sleep,
And soothed them into slumbers full and deep.

Soon they awoke clear-eyed: nor burned with
thirsting,
Nor with hot fingers, nor with temples bursting:
And springing up, they met the wondering sight
Of their dear friends, nigh foolish with delight;
Who feel their arms, and breasts, and kiss, and
stare,
And on their placid foreheads part the hair.
Young men and maidens at each other gazed,
With hands held back, and motionless, amazed
To see the brightness in each other's eyes;
And so they stood, filled with a sweet surprise,
Until their tongues were loosed in poesy.
Therefore no lover did of anguish die:
But the soft numbers, in that moment spoken,
Made silken ties, that never may be broken.
Cynthia! I cannot tell the greater blisses
That followed thine, and thy dear shepherd's kisses:
Was there a poet born?—But now no more—
My wandering spirit must no further soar.

FROM 'SLEEP AND POETRY'

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in summer?
What is more soothing than the pretty hummer
That stays one moment in an open flower,
And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?
What is more tranquil than a musk-rose blowing
In a green island, far from all men's knowing?
More healthful than the leafiness of dales?
More secret than a nest of nightingales?
More serene than Cordelia's countenance?
More full of visions than a high romance?
What, but thee, Sleep? Soft closer of our eyes
Low murmurer of tender lullabies!

Light hoverer around our happy pillows!
 Wreather of poppy buds, and weeping willows!
 Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses!
 Most happy listener! when the morning blesses
 Thee for enlivening all the cheerful eyes
 That glance so brightly at the new sun-rise.

* * * *

Stop and consider! life is but a day;
 A fragile dewdrop on its perilous way
 From a tree's summit; a poor Indian's sleep
 While his boat hastens to the monstrous steep
 Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan?
 Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown;
 The reading of an ever-changing tale;
 The light uplifting of a maiden's veil;
 A pigeon tumbling in clear summer air;
 A laughing schoolboy, without grief or care,
 Riding the springy branches of an elm.

EARLY SONNETS

(1)

Oh! how I love, on a fair summer's eve,
 When streams of light pour down the golden west,
 And on the balmy zephyrs tranquil rest
 The silver clouds, far—far away to leave
 All meaner thoughts, and take a sweet reprieve
 From little cares; to find, with easy quest,
 A fragrant wild, with Nature's beauty drest,
 And there into delight my soul deceive.
 There warm my breast with patriotic lore,
 Musing on Milton's fate—on Sydney's bier—
 Till their stern forms before my mind arise:
 Perhaps on wing of Poesy upsoar,
 Full often dropping a delicious tear,
 When some melodious sorrow spells mine eyes.

(2) ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

MUCH have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told,
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

(3)

KEEN fitful gusts are whispering here and there
Among the bushes, half leafless and dry;
The stars look very cold about the sky,
And I have many miles on foot to fare;
Yet feel I little of the cold bleak air,
Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,
Or of those silver lamps that burn on high,
Or of the distance from home's pleasant lair:
For I am brimfull of the friendliness
That in a little cottage I have found;
Of fair-haired Milton's eloquent distress,
And all his love for gentle Lycid' drowned,
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crowned.

(4).

HAPPY is England! I could be content
To see no other verdure than its own;
To feel no other breezes than are blown
Through its tall woods with high romances blent;
Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment
For skies Italian, and an inward groan
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne,
And half forget what world or worldling meant.
Happy is England, sweet her artless daughters:
Enough their simple loveliness for me,
Enough their whitest arms in silence clinging:
Yet do I often warmly burn to see
Beauties of deeper glance, and hear their singing,
And float with them about the summer waters.

(5) ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

THE poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead.
That is the grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half-lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

(6)

AFTER dark vapours have oppressed our plains
 For a long dreary season, comes a day
 Born of the gentle South, and clears away
 From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.
 The anxious month, relieved from its pains,
 Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May,
 The eye-lids with the passing coolness play,
 Like rose-leaves with the drip of summer rains.
 And calmest thoughts come round us—as of leaves
 Budding—fruit ripening in stillness—autumn
 suns
 Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves,—
 Sweet Sappho's cheek,—a sleeping infant's
 breath,—
 The gradual sand that through an hour-glass
 runs,—
 A woodland rivulet,—a Poet's death.

(7)

WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be
 Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,
 Before high-pilèd books, in charact'ry,
 Hold like full garnerers the full-ripened grain;
 When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
 Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
 And feel that I may never live to trace
 Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
 And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!
 That I shall never look upon thee more,
 Never have relish in the faery power
 Of unreflecting love!—then on the shore
 Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,
 Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

(8) ON THE SEA

It keeps eternal whisperings around
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the spell
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest shell
Be moved for days from whence it sometime fell,
When last the winds of heaven were unbound.
Oh ye! who have your eye-balls vexed and tired,
Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea;
Oh ye! whose ears are dinned with uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody,—
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and brood
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quired!

FROM 'ENDYMION'

(1)

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breath-
ing.

Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon

For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
 With the green world they live in; and clear rills
 That for themselves a cooling covert make
 'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,
 Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
 And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
 We have imagined for the mighty dead;
 All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
 An endless fountain of immortal drink,
 Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
 For one short hour; no, even as the trees
 That whisper round a temple become soon
 Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
 The passion poesy, glories infinite,
 Haunt us till they become a cheering light
 Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
 That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,
 They always must be with us, or we die.

Book I.

(2) SONG OF THE INDIAN MAID

'O SORROW!

Why dost borrow

The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips?—

To give maiden blushes

To the white rose bushes?

Or is't thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

'O Sorrow!

Why dost borrow

The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—

To give the glow-worm light?

Or, on a moonless night,

To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry?

‘ O Sorrow!

Why dost borrow

The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue?—

To give at evening pale

Unto the nightingale,

That thou mayst listen the cold dewes among?

‘ O Sorrow!

Why dost borrow

Heart’s lightness from the merriment of May?

A lover would not tread

A cowslip on the head,

Though he should dance from eve till peep of day—

Nor any drooping flower

Held sacred for thy bower,

Wherever he may sport himself and play.

‘ To Sorrow

I bade good morrow,

And thought to leave her far away behind;

But cheerly, cheerly,

She loves me dearly;

She is so constant to me, and so kind:

I would deceive her,

And so leave her,

But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

‘ Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,

I sat a-weeping: in the whole world wide

There was no one to ask me why I wept—

And so I kept

Brimming the water-lily cups with tears

Cold as my fears.

‘ Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,

I sat a-weeping: what enamoured bride,

Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,
But hides and shrouds
Beneath dark palm-trees by a river side?

'And as I sat, over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revellers: the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue—

'Twas Bacchus and his crew!

The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
From kissing cymbals made a merry din—

'Twas Bacchus and his kin!

Like to a moving vintage down they came,
Crowned with green leaves, and faces all on flame;
All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,
To scare thee, Melancholy!

O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!
And I forgot thee, as the berried holly
By shepherds is forgotten, when in June,
Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and moon:—
I rushed into the folly!

'Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,
Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,
With sidelong laughing;
And little rills of crimson wine imbrued
His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white
For Venus' pearly bite;
And near him rode Silenus on his ass,
Pelted with flowers as he on did pass
Tipsily quaffing.

'Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence came ye,
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your bowers desolate,
Your lutes, and gentler fate?

“We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,
A-conquering!

Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,
We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide:—
Come hither, lady fair, and joinèd be
To our wild minstrelsy!’

Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came ye,
So many, and so many, and such glee?

Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left
Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?—

“For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;
For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,
And cold mushrooms;

For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth;
Great god of breathless cups and chirping mirth!
Come hither, lady fair, and joinèd be
To our mad minstrelsy!’

‘Over wide streams and mountains great we went,
And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,
With Asian elephants:

Onward these myriads—with song and dance,
With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians’ prance,
Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,
Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,
Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil
Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers’ toil:
With toying oars and silken sails they glide,
Nor care for wind and tide.

‘Mounted on panthers’ furs and lions’ manes,
From rear to van they scour about the plains;

A three days' journey in a moment done;
And always, at the rising of the sun,
About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,
On spleenful unicorn.

'I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown
Before the vine-wreath crown!
I saw parched Abyssinia rouse and sing
To the silver cymbals' ring!
I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce
Old Tartary the fierce!
The kings of Ind their jewel-sceptres vail,
And from their treasures scatter pearlèd hail;
Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans,
And all his priesthood moans,
Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning pale.
Into these regions came I, following him,
Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim
To stray away into these forests drear,
Alone, without a peer:
And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

'Young stranger!
I've been a ranger
In search of pleasure throughout every clime;
Alas! 'tis not for me:
Bewitched I sure must be,
To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

'Come then, Sorrow,
Sweetest Sorrow!
Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast:
I thought to leave thee,
And deceive thee,
But now of all the world I love thee best.

‘There is not one,
No, no, not one
But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;
Thou art her mother,
And her brother,
Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade.’

Book IV

MEG MERRILIES

OLD MEG she was a gipsy,
And lived upon the moors;
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
And her house was out of doors.
Her apples were swart blackberries,
Her currants, pods o’ broom;
Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,
Her book a church-yard tomb.

Her brothers were the craggy hills,
Her sisters larchen trees;
Alone with her great family
She lived as she did please.
No breakfast had she many a morn,
No dinner many a noon,
And, ’stead of supper, she would stare
Full hard against the moon.

But every morn, of woodbine fresh
She made her garlanding,
And, every night, the dark glen yew
She wove, and she would sing.
And with her fingers, old and brown,
She plaited mats of rushes,
And gave them to the cottagers
She met among the bushes.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen,
And tall as Amazon;
An old red blanket cloak she wore,
A ship-hat had she on:
God rest her agèd bones somewhere!
She died full long ago!

LINES ON THE MERMAID TAVERN

SOULS of poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his maid Marian,
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away,
Nobody knew whither, till
An Astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,—
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new old-sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

ROBIN HOOD

TO A FRIEND

No! those days are gone away,
And their hours are old and grey,
And their minutes buried all
Under the down-trodden pall
Of the leaves of many years:
Many times have Winter's shears,
Frozen North, and chilling East,
Sounded tempests to the feast
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

No, the bugle sounds no more,
And the twanging bow no more;
Silent is the ivory shrill
Past the heath and up the hill;
There is no mid-forest laugh,
Where lone Echo gives the half
To some wight, amazed to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June
You may go, with sun or moon,
Or the seven stars to light you,
Or the polar ray to right you;
But you never may behold
Little John, or Robin bold;
Never one, of all the clan,
Thrumming on an empty can
Some old hunting ditty, while
He doth his green way beguile
To fair hostess Merriment,
Down beside the pasture Trent;

For he left the merry tale,
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;
Gone, the song of Gamelyn;
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw
Idling in the 'grené shawe';
All are gone away and past!
And if Robin should be cast
Sudden from his tufted grave,
And if Marian should have
Once again her forest days,
She would weep, and he would craze;
He would swear, for all his oaks,
Fall'n beneath the dock-yard strokes,
Have rotted on the briny seas;
She would weep that her wild bees
Sang not to her—strange! that honey
Can't be got without hard money!

So it is; yet let us sing
Honour to the old bow-string!
Honour to the bugle-horn!
Honour to the woods unshorn!
Honour to the Lincoln green!
Honour to the archer keen!
Honour to tight Little John,
And the horse he rode upon!
Honour to bold Robin Hood,
Sleeping in the underwood:
Honour to Maid Marian,
And to all the Sherwood clan!
Though their days have hurried by
Let us two a burden try.

TO FANCY

EVER let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let wingèd Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming:
Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the cakèd snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overawed,
Fancy, high-commissioned:—send her;
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;

All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heapèd Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it:—thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reapèd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearlèd with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its cellèd sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin!
Freckled nest eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down-pattering
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Every thing is spoilt by use:
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gazed at? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary? Where's the face
One would meet in every place?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
Let, then, wingèd Fancy find
Thee a mistress to thy mind:
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,
Ere the God of Torment taught her
How to frown and how to chide;
With a waist and with a side
White as Hebe's, when her zone
Slipt its golden clasp, and down
Fell her kirtle to her feet,
While she held the goblet sweet,
And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh
Of the Fancy's silken leash;
Quickly break her prison-string,
And such joys as these she'll bring.—
Let the wingèd Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

ODES

(1) TO THE POETS

Written on the blank page before Beaumont and Fletcher's
Tragi-Comedy 'The Fair Maid of the Inn'.

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new?
Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wond'rous,
And the parle of voices thund'rous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large blue-bells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not;
Where the nightingale doth sing
Not a senseless, trancèd thing,
But divine melodious truth;
Philosophic numbers smooth;
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you,
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumbered, never cloying.

Here, your earth-born souls still speak
 To mortals, of their little week;
 Of their sorrows and delights;
 Of their passions and their spites;
 Of their glory and their shame;
 What doth strengthen, and what maim.
 Thus ye teach us, every day,
 Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
 Ye have left your souls on earth!
 Ye have souls in heaven too,
 Double-lived in regions new!

(2) TO PSYCHE

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung
 By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,
 And pardon that thy secrets should be sung,
 Even into thine own soft-conchèd ear:
 Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see
 The wingèd Psyche with awakened eyes?
 I wandered in a forest thoughtlessly,
 And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,
 Saw two fair creatures, couchèd side by side
 In deepest grass, beneath the whispering roof
 Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there
 ran

A brooklet, scarce espied:
 Mid hushed, cool-rooted flowers fragrant-eyed,
 Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,
 They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass;
 Their arms embracèd, and their pinions too;
 Their lips touched not, but had not bade adieu,

As if disjoinèd by soft-handed slumber,
And ready still past kisses to outnumber
At tender eye-dawn of aurorean love:
The wingèd boy I knew;
But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?
His Psyche true!

O latest-born and loveliest vision far
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!
Fairer than Phoebe's sapphire-regioned star,
Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky;
Fairer than these, though temple thou hast
none,
Nor altar heaped with flowers;
Nor Virgin-choir to make delicious moan
Upon the midnight hours;
No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet
From chain-swung censer teeming;
No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.
O brightest! though too late for antique vows,
Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,
When holy were the haunted forest boughs,
Holy the air, the water, and the fire;
Yet even in these days so far retired
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,
I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan
Upon the midnight hours!
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet
From swingèd censer teeming:
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branchèd thoughts, new-grown with pleasant
pain,
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:
Far, far around shall those dark-clustered trees
Fledge the wild-ridgèd mountains steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and
bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep;
And in the midst of this wide quietness
A rosy sanctuary will I dress
With the wreathed trellis of a working brain,
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same:
And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm Love in!

(3) TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves
run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,

Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy
cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy
hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined
flowers ;
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last ooziings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are
they ?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;
Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;
Hedge-cricket sing ; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

(4) ON MELANCHOLY

No, no! go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globèd peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous
tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine:
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

(5) TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
'That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and
dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer
eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!

No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for
home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell

To toll me back from thee to my sole self.

Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well

As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades

Past the near meadows, over the still stream,

Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades:

Was it a vision, or a waking dream?

Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep?

(6) ON A GRECIAN URN

THOU still unravished bride of quietness!

Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,

Sylvan historian, who canst thus express

A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:

What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape

Of deities or mortals, or of both,

In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?

What men or gods are these? What maidens
loath?

What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?

What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not
leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy
bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;
 Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought
 As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
 When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'—that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

ISABELLA, OR THE POT OF BASIL

A STORY, FROM BOCCACCIO

I

FAIR Isabel, poor simple Isabel!
 Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye!
 They could not in the self-same mansion dwell
 Without some stir of heart, some malady;
 They could not sit at meals but feel how well
 It soothèd each to be the other by;
 They could not, sure, beneath the same roof sleep,
 But to each other dream, and nightly weep.

II

With every morn their love grew tenderer,
 With every eve deeper and tenderer still;
 He might not in house, field, or garden stir,
 But her full shape would all his seeing fill;
 And his continual voice was pleasanter
 To her, than noise of trees or hidden rill;
 Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,
 She spoilt her half-done broidery with the same.

III

He knew whose gentle hand was at the latch,
Before the door had given her to his eyes;
And from her chamber-window he would catch
Her beauty farther than the falcon spies;
And constant as her vespers would he watch,
Because her face was turned to the same skies;
And with sick longing all the night outwear,
To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

IV

A whole long month of May in this sad plight
Made their cheeks paler by the break of June:
'To-morrow will I bow to my delight,
To-morrow will I ask my lady's boon.'—
'O may I never see another night,
Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's tune.'—
So spake they to their pillows; but, alas,
Honeyless days and days did he let pass;

V

Until sweet Isabella's untouched cheek
Fell sick within the rose's just domain,
Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth seek
By every lull to cool her infant's pain:
'How ill she is!' said he, 'I may not speak,
And yet I will, and tell my love all plain:
If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her tears,
And at the least 'twill startle off her cares.'

VI

So said he one fair morning, and all day
His heart beat awfully against his side;
And to his heart he inwardly did pray
For power to speak; but still the ruddy tide

Stifled his voice, and pulsed resolve away—

Fevered his high conceit of such a bride,
Yet brought him to the meekness of a child:
Alas! when passion is both meek and wild!

VII

So once more he had waked and anguishèd

A dreary night of love and misery,
If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed

To every symbol on his forehead high;
She saw it waxing very pale and dead,

And straight all flushed; so, lispèd tenderly,
'Lorenzo!'—here she ceased her timid quest,
But in her tone and look he read the rest.

VIII

'O Isabella! I can half perceive

That I may speak my grief into thine ear;
If thou didst ever anything believe,

Believe how I love thee, believe how near
My soul is to its doom: I would not grieve

Thy hand by unwelcome pressing, would not fear
Thine eyes by gazing; but I cannot live
Another night, and not my passion shrive.

IX

'Love: thou art leading me from wintry cold,

Lady! thou leadest me to summer clime,
And I must taste the blossoms that unfold

In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time.'
So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,

And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme:
Great bliss was with them, and great happiness
Grew, like a lusty flower in June's caress.

X

Parting they seemed to tread upon the air,
Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart
Only to meet again more close, and share
The inward fragrance of each other's heart.
She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair
Sang, of delicious love and honeyed dart;
He with light steps went up a western hill,
And bade the sun farewell, and joyed his fill.

XI

All close they met again, before the dusk
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,
All close they met, all eves, before the dusk
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,
Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,
Unknown of any, free from whispering tale.
Ah! better had it been for ever so,
Than idle ears should pleasure in their woe.

XII

Were they unhappy then?—It cannot be—
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,
Too many sighs give we to them in fee,
Too much of pity after they are dead,
Too many doleful stories do we see,
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read;
Except in such a page where Theseus' spouse
Over the pathless waves towards him bows.

XIII

But, for the general award of love,
The little sweet doth kill much bitterness;
Though Dido silent is in under-grove,
And Isabella's was a great distress,

Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian clove
Was not embalmed, this truth is not the less—
Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-bowers,
Know there is richest juice in poison-flowers.

XIV

With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,
Enrichèd from ancestral merchandise,
And for them many a weary hand did swelt
In torchèd mines and noisy factories,
And many once proud-quivered loins did melt
In blood from stinging whip; with hollow eyes
Many all day in dazzling river stood,
To take the rich-ored driftings of the flood.

XV

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,
And went all naked to the hungry shark;
For them his ears gushed blood; for them in death
The seal on the cold ice with piteous bark
Lay full of darts; for them alone did seethe
A thousand men in troubles wide and dark:
Half-ignorant, they turned an easy wheel,
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

XVI

Why were they proud? Because their marble founts
Gushed with more pride than do a wretch's tears?
Why were they proud? Because fair orange-
mounts
Were of more soft ascent than lazar stairs?
Why were they proud? Because red-lined accounts
Were richer than the songs of Grecian years?
Why were they proud? again we ask aloud,
Why in the name of Glory were they proud?

XVII

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired
In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,
As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,
Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-spies;
The hawks of ship-mast forests—the untired
And panniered mules for ducats and old lies—
Quick cat's-paw on the generous stray-away,—
Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

XVIII

How was it these same ledger-men could spy
Fair Isabella in her downy nest?
How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye
A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's pest
Into their vision covetous and sly!
How could these money-bags see east and west?
Yet so they did—and every dealer fair
Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

XIX

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!
Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,
And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,
And of thy roses amorous of the moon,
And of thy lilies, that do paler grow
Now they can no more hear thy ghittern's tune,
For venturing syllables that ill beseem
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

XX

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale
Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;
There is no other crime, no mad assail
To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet:

But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—
To honour thee, and thy gone spirit greet;
To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

XXI

These brethren having found by many signs
What love Lorenzo for their sister had,
And how she loved him too, each unconfines
His bitter thoughts to other, well-nigh mad
That he, the servant of their trade designs,
Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad,
When 'twas their plan to coax her by degrees
To some high noble and his olive-trees.

XXII

And many a jealous conference had they,
And many times they bit their lips alone,
Before they fixed upon a surest way
To make the youngster for his crime atone;
And at the last, these men of cruel clay
Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the bone;
For they resolvèd in some forest dim
To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

XXIII

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant
Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade
Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent
Their footing through the dews; and to him said,
'You seem there in the quiet of content,
Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade
Calm speculation; but if you are wise,
Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.

XXIV

'To-day we purpose, ay, this hour we mount
To spur three leagues towards the Apennine;
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count
His dewy rosary on the eglantine.'
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,
Bowed a fair greeting to these serpents' whine,
And went in haste, to get in readiness,
With belt, and spur, and bracing huntsman's dress.

XXV

And as he to the court-yard passed along,
Each third step did he pause, and listened oft
If he could hear his lady's matin-song,
Or the light whisper of her footstep soft;
And as he thus over his passion hung,
He heard a laugh full musical aloft;
When, looking up, he saw her features bright
Smile through an in-door lattice all delight.

XXVI

'Love, Isabel!' said he, 'I was in pain
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good morrow:
Ah! what if I should lose thee, when so fain
I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow
Of a poor three hours' absence? but we'll gain
Out of the amorous dark what day doth borrow.
Good bye! I'll soon be back.'—'Good bye!' said
she:
And as he went she chanted merrily.

XXVII

So the two brothers and their murdered man
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream
Gurgles through straitened banks, and still doth fan
Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream

Keeps head against the freshets. Sick and wan
The brothers' faces in the ford did seem,
Lorenzo's flush with love. They passed the water
Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

XXVIII

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,
There in that forest did his great love cease;
Ah! when a soul doth thus its freedom win,
It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace
As the break-covert blood-hounds of such sin:
They dipped their swords in the water, and did
tease
Their horses homeward, with convulsèd spur,
Each richer by his being a murderer.

XXIX

They told their sister how, with sudden speed,
Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign lands,
Because of some great urgency and need
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.
Poor girl! put on thy stifling widow's weed,
And 'scape at once from Hope's accursèd bands;
To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,
And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

XXX

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be;
Sorely she wept until the night came on,
And then, instead of love, O misery!
She brooded o'er the luxury alone:
His image in the dusk she seemed to see,
And to the silence made a gentle moan,
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,
And on her couch low murmuring, 'Where? O
where?'

XXXI

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long
Its fiery vigil in her single breast;
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung
Upon the time with feverish unrest—
Not long; for soon into her heart a throng
Of higher occupants, a richer zest,
Came tragic; passion not to be subdued,
And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

XXXII

In the mid days of autumn, on their eves
The breath of Winter comes from far away,
And the sick west continually bereaves
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay
Of death among the bushes and the leaves,
To make all bare before he dares to stray
From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

XXXIII

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes
She asked her brothers, with an eye all pale
Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes
Could keep him off so long? They spake a tale
Time after time, to quiet her. Their crimes
Came on them, like a smoke from Hinnom's vale;
And every night in dreams they groaned aloud,
To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

XXXIV

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,
But for a thing more deadly dark than all;
It came like a fierce potion, drunk by chance,
Which saves a sick man from the feathered pall

For some few gasping moments; like a lance,
Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall
With cruel pierce, and bringing him again
Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and brain.

XXXV

It was a vision. In the drowsy gloom,
The dull of midnight, at her couch's foot
Lorenzo stood, and wept: the forest tomb
Had marred his glossy hair which once could
shoot
Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom
Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute
From his lorn voice, and past his loamed ears
Had made a miry channel for his tears.

XXXVI

Strange sound it was, when the pale shadow spake,
For there was striving, in its piteous tongue,
To speak as when on earth it was awake,
And Isabella on its music hung:
Languor there was in it, and tremulous shake,
As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung;
And through it moaned a ghostly under-song,
Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars among.

XXXVII

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy bright
With love, and kept all phantom fear aloof
From the poor girl by magic of their light,
The while it did unthread the horrid woof
Of the late darkened time—the murderous spite
Of pride and avarice—the dark pine roof
In the forest—and the sodden turfèd dell,
Where, without any word, from stabs he fell.

XXXVIII

Saying moreover, 'Isabel, my sweet!

Red whortle-berries droop above my head,
And a large flint-stone weighs upon my feet;
Around me beeches and high chestnuts shed
Their leaves and prickly-nuts; a sheep-fold bleat
Comes from beyond the river to my bed:
Go, shed one tear upon my heather-bloom,
And it shall comfort me within the tomb.

XXXIX

'I am a shadow now, alas! alas!

Upon the skirts of human nature dwelling
Alone: I chant alone the holy mass,
While little sounds of life are round me knelling,
And glossy bees at noon do fieldward pass,
And many a chapel bell the hour is telling,
Paining me through: those sounds grow strange to
me,
And thou art distant in Humanity.

XL

'I know what was, I feel full well what is,
And I should rage, if spirits could go mad;
Though I forget the taste of earthly bliss,
That paleness warms my grave, as though I had
A seraph chosen from the bright abyss
To be my spouse: thy paleness makes me glad:
Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel
A greater love through all my essence steal.'

XLI

The Spirit mourned 'Adieu!'—dissolved, and left
The atom darkness in a slow turmoil;
As when of healthful midnight sleep bereft,
Thinking on ruggèd hours and fruitless toil,

We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,
And see the spangly gloom froth up and boil:
It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,
And in the dawn she started up awake;

XLII

'Ha! ha!' said she, 'I knew not this hard life,
I thought the worst was simple misery;
I thought some Fate with pleasure or with strife
Portioned us—happy days, or else to die;
But there is crime—a brother's bloody knife!
Sweet Spirit, thou hast schooled my infancy:
I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,
And greet thee morn and even in the skies.'

XLIII

When the full morning came, she had devised
How she might secret to the forest hie;
How she might find the clay, so dearly prized,
And sing to it one latest lullaby;
How her short absence might be unsurmised,
While she the inmost of the dream would try.
Resolved, she took with her an aged nurse,
And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

XLIV

See, as they creep along the river side,
How she doth whisper to that aged dame,
And, after looking round the champaign wide,
Shows her a knife.—'What feverous hectic flame
Burns in thee, child?—what good can thee betide
That thou shouldst smile again?'—The evening
came,
And they had found Lorenzo's earthy bed;
The flint was there, the berries at his head.

XLV

Who hath not loitered in a green church-yard,
And let his spirit, like a demon mole,
Work through the clayey soil and gravel hard,
To see skull, confined bones, and funeral stole;
Pitying each form that hungry Death had marred,
And filling it once more with human soul?
Ah! this is holiday to what was felt
When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt.

XLVI

She gazed into the fresh-thrown mould, as though
One glance did fully all its secrets tell;
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well;
Upon the murderous spot she seemed to grow,
Like to a native lily of the dell:
Then with her knife, all sudden she began
To dig more fervently than misers can.

XLVII

Soon she turned up a soiled glove, whereon
Her silk had played in purple phantasies;
She kissed it with a lip more chill than stone,
And put it in her bosom, where it dries
And freezes utterly unto the bone
Those dainties made to still an infant's cries:
Then 'gan she work again; nor stayed her care,
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

XLVIII

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,
Until her heart felt pity to the core
At sight of such a dismal labouring,
And so she kneelèd, with her locks all hoar,

And put her lean hands to the horrid thing:

Three hours they laboured at this travail sore;
At last they felt the kernel of the grave,
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

XLIX

Ah! wherefore all this wormy circumstance?

Why linger at the yawning tomb so long?
O for the gentleness of old Romance,

The simple plaining of a minstrel's song!
Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,

For here, in truth, it doth not well belong
To speak:—O turn thee to the very tale,
And taste the music of that vision pale.

L

With duller steel than the Perséan sword

They cut away no formless monster's head,
But one, whose gentleness did well accord

With death, as life. The ancient harps have said,
Love never dies, but lives, immortal Lord:

If Love impersonate was ever dead,
Pale Isabella kissed it, and low moaned.

'Twas love; cold,—dead indeed, but not dethroned.

LI

In anxious secrecy they took it home,

And then the prize was all for Isabel:
She calmed its wild hair with a golden comb,

And all around each eye's sepulchral cell
Pointed each fringed lash; the smearèd loam

With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,
She drenched away: and still she combed and kept
Sighing all day—and still she kissed and wept.

LII

Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dew
Of precious flowers plucked in Araby,
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—
She wrapped it up; and for its tomb did choose
A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by,
And covered it with mould, and o'er it set
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

LIII

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,
And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
And the new morn she saw not: but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moistened it with tears unto the core.

LIV

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,
Whence thick, and green, and beautiful it grew,
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers
Of Basil-tufts in Florence; for it drew
Nurture besides, and life, from human fears,
From the fast mouldering head there shut from
view:
So that the jewel, safely casketed,
Came forth, and in perfumèd leaflets spread.

LV

O Melancholy, linger here awhile
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,
Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!

Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile;
Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,
And make a pale light in your cypress glooms,
Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs.

LVI

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,
From the deep throat of sad Melpomene!
Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,
And touch the strings into a mystery;
Sound mournfully upon the winds and low;
For simple Isabel is soon to be
Among the dead: She withers, like a palm
Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

LVII

O leave the palm to wither by itself;
Let not quick Winter chill its dying hour!—
It may not be—those Baálites of pelf,
Her brethren, noted the continual shower
From her dead eyes; and many a curious elf,
Among her kindred, wondered that such dower
Of youth and beauty should be thrown aside
By one marked out to be a Noble's bride.

LVIII

And, furthermore, her brethren wondered much
Why she sat drooping by the Basil green,
And why it flourished, as by magic touch;
Greatly they wondered what the thing might
mean:
They could not surely give belief, that such
A very nothing would have power to wean
Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures gay,
And even remembrance of her love's delay.

LIX

Therefore they watched a time when they might sift
This hidden whim; and long they watched in vain;
For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,
And seldom felt she any hunger-pain:
And when she left, she hurried back, as swift
As bird on wing to breast its eggs again:
And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there
Beside her Basil, weeping through her hair.

LX

Yet they contrived to steal the Basil-pot,
And to examine it in secret place:
The thing was vile with green and livid spot,
And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face:
The guerdon of their murder they had got,
And so left Florence in a moment's space,
Never to turn again.—Away they went,
With blood upon their heads, to banishment.

LXI

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away!
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!
O Echo, Echo, on some other day,
From isles Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!
Spirits of grief, sing not your 'Well-a-way!'
For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die;
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,
Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

LXII

Piteous she looked on dead and senseless things,
Asking for her lost Basil amorously:
And with melodious chuckle in the strings
Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry

After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,
To ask him where her Basil was; and why
'Twas hid from her: 'For cruel 'tis,' said she.
'To steal my Basil-pot away from me.'

LXIII

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,
Imploring for her Basil to the last.
No heart was there in Florence but did mourn
In pity of her love, so overcast.
And a sad ditty of this story borne
From mouth to mouth through all the country
passed:
Still is the burthen sung—'O cruelty,
To steal my Basil-pot away from me!'

FROM 'HYPERION: A VISION'

'Holy Power,'
Cried I, approaching near the hornèd shrine,
'What am I that should so be saved from death?
What am I that another death come not
To choke my utterance, sacrilegious, here?'
Then said the veiled shadow: 'Thou hast felt
What 'tis to die and live again before
Thy fated hour; that thou hadst power to do so
Is thine own safety; thou hast dated on
Thy doom.' 'High Prophetess,' said I, 'purge off,
Benign, if so it please thee, my mind's film.'
'None can usurp this height,' returned that shade,
'But those to whom the miseries of the world
Are misery, and will not let them rest.
All else who find a haven in the world,
Where they may thoughtless sleep away their days,

If by a chance into this fane they come,
Rot on the pavement where thou rottedst half.'
'Are there not thousands in the world,' said I,
Encouraged by the sooth voice of the shade,
'Who love their fellows even to the death,
Who feel the giant agony of the world,
And more, like slaves to poor humanity,
Labour for mortal good? I sure should see
Other men here, but I am here alone.'
'Those whom thou spak'st of are no visionaries,'
Rejoined that voice; 'they are no dreamers weak;
They seek no wonder but the human face,
No music but a happy-noted voice:
They come not here, they have no thought to come;
And thou art here, for thou art less than they.
What benefit canst thou do, or all thy tribe,
To the great world? Thou art a dreaming thing,
A fever of thyself: think of the earth;
What bliss, even in hope, is there for thee?
What haven? every creature hath its home,
Every sole man hath days of joy and pain,
Whether his labours be sublime or low—
The pain alone, the joy alone, distinct:
Only the dreamer venoms all his days,
Bearing more woe than all his sins deserve.
Therefore, that happiness be somewhat shared,
Such things as thou art are admitted oft
Into like gardens thou didst pass erewhile,
And suffered in these temples: for that cause
Thou standest safe beneath this statue's knees.
'That I am favoured for unworthiness,
By such propitious parley medicined
In sickness not ignoble, I rejoice,
Ay, and could weep for love of such award.'

So answered I, continuing, 'If it please,
Majestic shadow, tell me where I am,
Whose altar this, for whom this incense curls;
What image this whose face I cannot see
For the broad marble knees; and who thou art,
Of accent feminine, so courteous?'

FROM 'HYPERION: A FRAGMENT'

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat grey-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair;
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the feathered grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
By reason of his fallen divinity,
Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds
Pressed her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,
No further than to where his feet had strayed,
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,
Unsceptred; and his realmless eyes were closed;
While his bowed head seemed listening to the Earth,
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seemed no force could wake him from his place:
But there came one, who with a kindred hand
Touched his wide shoulders, after bending low
With reverence, though to one who knew it not.

She was a Goddess of the infant world ;
By her in stature the tall Amazon
Had stood a pigmy's height: she would have ta'en
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;
Or with a finger stayed Ixion's wheel.
Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,
Pedestal'd haply in a palace-court,
When sages looked to Egypt for their lore.
But oh ! how unlike marble was that face :
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.
There was a listening fear in her regard,
As if calamity had but begun ;
As if the vanward clouds of evil days
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear
Was with its storèd thunder labouring up.
One hand she pressed upon that aching spot
Where beats the human heart, as if just there,
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain :
The other upon Saturn's bended neck
She laid, and to the level of his ear
Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake
In solemn tenour and deep organ tone :
Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue
Would come in these like accents ; O how frail
To that large utterance of the early Gods !
'Saturn, look up !—though wherefore, poor old
King ?

I have no comfort for thee, no not one :
I cannot say, "O wherefore sleepest thou ?"
For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth
Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God ;
And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,
Has from thy sceptre passed ; and all the air

Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.
Thy thunder, conscious of the new command,
Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house;
And thy sharp lightning in unpractised hands
Scorches and burns our once serene domain.
O aching time! O moments big as years!
All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,
And press it so upon our weary griefs
That unbelief has not a space to breathe.
Saturn, sleep on:—O thoughtless, why did I
Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?
Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes?
Saturn, sleep on! while at thy feet I weep.'

As when, upon a trancèd summer-night,
Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks, branch-charmèd by the earnest stars,
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,
Save from one gradual solitary gust
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,
As if the ebbing air had but one wave:
So came these words and went; the while in tears
She touched her fair large forehead to the ground,
Just where her falling hair might be outspread
A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.
One moon, with alternations slow, had shed
Her silver seasons four upon the night,
And still these two were postured motionless,
Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern;
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet:
Until at length old Saturn lifted up
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,

And that fair kneeling Goddess; and then spake
As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard
Shook horrid with such aspen malady:
'O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,
Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face;
Look up, and let me see our doom in it;
Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape
Is Saturn's; tell me, if thou hear'st the voice
Of Saturn; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,
Naked and bare of its great diadem,
Peers like the front of Saturn? Who had power
To make me desolate? whence came the strength?
How was it nurtured to such bursting forth.
While Fate seemed strangled in my nervous grasp?
But it is so; and I am smothered up,
And buried from all godlike exercise
Of influence benign on planets pale,
Of admonitions to the winds and seas,
Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting,
And all those acts which Deity supreme
Doth ease its heart of love in. I am gone
Away from my own bosom: I have left
My strong identity, my real self,
Somewhere between the throne, and where I sit
Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea, search,
Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them round
Upon all space: space starred, and lorn of light,
Space regioned with life-air, and barren void,
Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.
Search, Thea, search! and tell me if thou seest
A certain shape or shadow, making way
With wings or chariot fierce to repossess
A heaven he lost erewhile: it must—it must
Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be king!

Yes, there must be a golden victory;
 There must be Gods thrown down, and trumpets
 blown
 Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival
 Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,
 Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir
 Of strings in hollow shells; and there shall be
 Beautiful things made new, for the surprise
 Of the sky-children; I will give command:
 Thea! Thea! Thea! where is Saturn?'

Book I.

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

I

ST. AGNES' Eve—ah, bitter chill it was!
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
 The hare limped trembling through the frozen
 grass,
 And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
 Numb were the Beadsman's fingers while he told
 His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
 Like pious incense from a censer old,
 Seemed taking flight for heaven without a death,
 Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he
 saith.

II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
 Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
 And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan.
 Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
 The sculptured dead, on each side seem to freeze,
 Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails:
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
 He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flattered to tears this agèd man and poor.
But no—already had his death-bell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung:
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to
grieve.

IV

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carvèd angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put crosswise on
their breasts.

V

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
The brain new-stuffed, in youth, with triumphs
gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

VI

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they
desire.

VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retired; not cooled by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was elsewhere;
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the
year.

VIII

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallowed hour was near at hand, she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort
Of whisperers in anger or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwinked with faery fancy; all amorn,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

IX

So, purposing each moment to retire,
 She lingered still. Meantime, across the moors,
 Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
 For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
 Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and im-
 plores

All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
 But for one moment in the tedious hours,
 That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
 Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such
 things have been.

X

He ventures in: let no buzzed whisper tell,
 All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
 Will storm his heart, Love's feverous citadel:
 For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,
 Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
 Whose very dogs would execration howl
 Against his lineage: not one breast affords
 Him any mercy in that mansion foul,
 Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI

Ah, happy chance! The aged creature came,
 Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
 To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
 Behind a broad hall pillar, far beyond
 The sound of merriment and chorus bland.
 He startled her: but soon she knew his face,
 And grasped his fingers in her palsied hand,
 Saying, 'Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this
 place;
 They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty
 race!

XII

'Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand:

He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursèd thee and thine, both house and land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
More tame for his grey hairs—Alas me! flit!
Flit like a ghost away.'—'Ah, Gossip dear,
We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,
And tell me how'—'Good saints! not here, not here;
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy
bier.'

XIII

He followed through a lowly archèd way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;
And as she muttered 'Well-a—well-a-day!'
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
'Now tell me where is Madeline,' said he,
'O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously.'

XIV

'St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve—
Yet men will murder upon holy days.
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays
To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjurer plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile,—I've mickle time to
grieve.'

XV

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepeth closed a wondrous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:
'A cruel man and impious thou art:
Sweet lady! let her pray, and sleep and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst
seem.'

XVII

'I will not harm her, by all saints I swear!'
Quoth Porphyro: 'O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face.
Good Angela, believe me, by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fanged than
wolves and bears.'

XVIII

'Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,
Were never missed.' Thus plaining, doth she
bring

A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

XIX

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legioned fairies paced the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

XX

'It shall be as thou wishest,' said the Dame:
'All cates and dainties shall be stored there
Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour
frame

Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.

Wait here, my child, with patience kneel in
prayer

The while. Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead.'

XXI

So saying she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;
The dame returned, and whispered in his ear
To follow her; with aged eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed and
chaste;

Where Porphyro took covert, pleased amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmèd maid,
Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turned, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove frayed
and fled.

XXIII

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

XXIV

A casement high and triple-arched there was,
All garlanded with carven imageries,
Of fruits and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens
and kings.

XXV

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

XXVI

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathèd pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmèd jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is
fled.

XXVII

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppressed
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully havened both from joy and pain;
Clasped like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII

Stolen to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listened to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breathed himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hushed carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo!—how
fast she slept!

XXIX

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguished, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet:—
O for some drowsy Morpheap amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone:—
The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise is
gone.

XXX

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth, and lavendered,
While he from forth the closet brought a
heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez; and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

XXXI

These delicacies he heaped with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retirèd quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—
'And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth
ache.'

XXXII

Thus whispering, his warm, unnervèd arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as icèd stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seemed he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mused awhile, entoièd in woofèd phantasies.

XXXIII

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,
He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called 'La belle dame sans mercy':
Close to her ear touching the melody;—
Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft moan:
He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly
Her blue affrayèd eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured
stone.

XXXIV

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh expelled
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep.
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh,
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joinèd hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she looked so dreamingly.

XXXV

'Ah, Porphyro!' said she, 'but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tunable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and
drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go.'

XXXVI

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far
 At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
 Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star
 Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
 Into her dream he melted, as the rose
 Blendeth its odour with the violet,—
 Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows
 Like Love's alarum, pattering the sharp sleet
 Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath
 set.

XXXVII

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet.
 'This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!'
 'Tis dark: the icèd gusts still rave and beat:
 'No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
 Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.
 Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
 I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
 Though thou forsakest a deceivèd thing;—
 A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing.'

XXXVIII

'My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
 Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
 Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and vermeil-
 dyed?
 Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
 After so many hours of toil and quest,
 A famished pilgrim,—saved by miracle.
 Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest,
 Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
 To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

XXXIX

'Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
The bloated wassailers will never heed;—
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead.
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee.'

XL

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears.
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found;
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each
door;
The arras, rich with horsemen, hawk, and hound,
Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall!
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his
hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

XLII

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
 These lovers fled away into the storm.
 That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
 And all his warrior-guests with shade and form
 Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
 Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
 Died palsy-twitched, with meagre face deform;
 The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
 For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.

FROM 'LAMIA'

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,
 Is—Love, forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust;
 Love in a palace is perhaps at last
 More grievous torment than a hermit's fast:—
 That is a doubtful tale from faery land,
 Hard for the non-elect to understand.

Part II.

SONG

In a drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy tree,
 Thy branches ne'er remember
 Their green felicity:
 The north cannot undo them
 With a sleety whistle through them;
 Nor frozen thawings glue them
 From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy brook,
 Thy bubblings ne'er remember
 Apollo's summer look;

But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passèd joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it
Nor numbèd sense to steal it,
Was never said in rhyme.

FAERY SONG

SHED no tear! oh shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Weep no more! oh weep no more!
Young buds sleep in the root's white core.
Dry your eyes! oh dry your eyes!
For I was taught in Paradise
To ease my breast of melodies—
Shed no tear.

Overhead! look overhead!
'Mong the blossoms white and red—
Look up, look up. I flutter now
On this flush pomegranate bough.
See me! 'tis this silvery bill
Ever cures the good man's ill.
Shed no tear! Oh shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Adieu, adieu!—I fly, adieu!
I vanish in the heaven's blue—
Adieu! Adieu!

BALLAD

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

I

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

II

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

III

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

IV

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

V

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

VI

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

VII

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
‘I love thee true!’

VIII

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighed full sore;
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

IX

And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dreamed—ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill side.

X

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried—‘La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!’

XI

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill side.

XII

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

SONNETS

(1)

To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by:
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

(2) THE HUMAN SEASONS

FOUR Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honeyed cud of youthful thought he
loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming nigh
His nearest unto Heaven: quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

(3) To HOMER

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance
To visit dolphin-coral in deep seas.
So thou wast blind!—but then the veil was rent;
For Jove uncurtained Heaven to let thee live,
And Neptune made for thee a spermy tent,
And Pan made sing for thee his forest-hive;
Ay, on the shores of darkness there is light,
And precipices show untrodden green;
There is a budding morrow in midnight;
There is a triple sight in blindness keen;
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befel,
To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven, and Hell.

(4) To SLEEP

O SOFT embalmer of the still midnight!
Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine;
O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close,
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities;
Then save me, or the passèd day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes;
Save me from curious conscience, that still lords
Its strength, for darkness burrowing like a mole;
Turn the key deftly in the oilèd wards,
And seal the hushèd casket of my soul.

(5) ON A DREAM

As Hermes once took to his feathers light,
When lullèd Argus, baffled, swooned and slept,
So on a Delphic reed, my idle spright,
So played, so charmed, so conquered, so bereft
The dragon-world of all its hundred eyes,
And seeing it asleep, so fled away,
Not to pure Ida with its snow-cold skies,
Nor unto Tempe, where Jove grieved a day;
But to that second circle of sad Hell,
Where in the gust, the whirlwind, and the flaw
Of rain and hail-stones, lovers need not tell
Their sorrows,—pale were the sweet lips I saw,
Pale were the lips I kissed, and fair the form
I floated with, about that melancholy storm.

(6) KEATS'S LAST SONNET

BRIGHT star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

GEORGE DARLEY

1795-1846

THE LOVELINESS OF LOVE

It is not Beauty I demand,
 A crystal brow, the moon's despair,
 Nor the snow's daughter, a white hand,
 Nor mermaid's yellow pride of hair:

Tell me not of your starry eyes,
 Your lips that seem on roses fed,
 Your breasts, where Cupid trembling lies
 Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed:—

A bloomy pair of vermeil cheeks
 Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours,
 A breath that softer music speaks
 Than summer winds a-wooing flowers,

These are but gauds: nay, what are lips?
 Coral beneath the ocean-stream,
 Whose brink when your adventurer sips
 Full oft he perisheth on them.

And what are cheeks, but ensigns oft
 That wave hot youth to fields of blood?
 Did Helen's breast, though ne'er so soft,
 Do Greece or Ilium any good?

Eyes can with baleful ardour burn;
 Poison can breath, that erst perfumed;
 There's many a white hand holds an urn
 With lovers' hearts to dust consumed.

For crystal brows—there's nought within;
 They are but empty cells for pride;
 He who the Syren's hair would win
 Is mostly strangled in the tide.

Give me, instead of Beauty's bust,
A tender heart, a loyal mind
Which with temptation I could trust,
Yet never linked with error find,—
One in whose gentle bosom I
Could pour my secret heart of woes,
Like the care-burthened honey-fly
That hides his murmurs in the rose,—
My earthly Comforter! whose love
So indefeasible might be
That, when my spirit won above,
Hers could not stay, for sympathy.

SONG

SWEET in her green dell the flower of beauty
slumbers,
Lulled by the faint breezes sighing through her
hair;
Sleeps she and hears not the melancholy numbers
Breathed to my sad lute 'mid the lonely air.
Down from the high cliffs the rivulet is teeming
To wind round the willow banks that lure him
from above:
O that in tears, from my rocky prison streaming,
I too could glide to the bower of my love!
Ah! where the woodbines with sleepy arms have
wound her,
Opes she her eyelids at the dream of my lay,
Listening, like the dove, while the fountains echo
round her,
To her lost mate's call in the forests far away.

Come then, my bird! For the peace thou ever
bearest,

Still Heaven's messenger of comfort to me—
Come—this fond bosom, O faithfullest and fairest,
Bleeds with its death-wound, its wound of love
for thee!

HARTLEY COLERIDGE

1796–1849

SHE WAS A QUEEN

SHE was a queen of noble Nature's crowning,
A smile of hers was like an act of grace;
She had no winsome looks, no pretty frowning,
Like daily beauties of the vulgar race:
But if she smiled, a light was on her face,
A clear, cool kindliness, a lunar beam
Of peaceful radiance, silvering o'er the stream
Of human thought with unabiding glory;
Not quite a waking truth, not quite a dream,
A visitation, bright and transitory.

But she is changed,—hath felt the touch of sorrow,
No love hath she, no understanding friend;
O grief! when Heaven is forced of earth to borrow
What the poor niggard earth has not to lend;
But when the stalk is snapt, the rose must bend.
The tallest flower that skyward rears its head
Grows from the common ground, and there must
shed

Its delicate petals. Cruel fate, too surely,
That they should find so base a bridal bed,
Who lived in virgin pride, so sweet and purely.

She had a brother, and a tender father,
And she was loved, but not as others are
From whom we ask return of love,—but rather
As one might love a dream; a phantom fair
Of something exquisitely strange and rare,
Which all were glad to look on, men and maids,
Yet no one claimed—as oft, in dewy glades,
The peering primrose, like a sudden gladness,
Gleams on the soul, yet unregarded fades;—
The joy is ours, but all its own the sadness.

'Tis vain to say—her worst of grief is only
The common lot, which all the world have known;
To her 'tis more, because her heart is lonely,
And yet she hath no strength to stand alone,—
Once she had playmates, fancies of her own,
And she did love them. They are past away
As Fairies vanish at the break of day;
And like a spectre of an age departed,
Or unsphered Angel wofully astray,
She glides along—the solitary-hearted.

SONG

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be;
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me.
O then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.
But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

TO A LOFTY BEAUTY, FROM HER
POOR KINSMAN

FAIR maid, had I not heard thy baby cries,
Nor seen thy girlish, sweet vicissitude,
Thy mazy motions, striving to elude,
Yet wooing still a parent's watchful eyes,
Thy humours, many as the opal's dyes,
And lovely all;—methinks thy scornful mood,
And bearing high of stately womanhood,—
Thy brow, where Beauty sits to tyrannize
O'er humble love, had made me sadly fear thee;
For never sure was seen a royal bride,
Whose gentleness gave grace to so much pride—
My very thoughts would tremble to be near thee:
But when I see thee at thy father's side,
Old times unqueen thee, and old loves endear thee.

MULTUM DILEXIT

SHE sat and wept beside His feet; the weight
Of sin oppressed her heart; for all the blame,
And the poor malice of the worldly shame,
To her was past, extinct, and out of date:

Only the sin remained,—the leprous state;
She would be melted by the heat of love,
By fires far fiercer than are blown to prove
And purge the silver ore adulterate.

She sat and wept, and with her untressed hair
Still wiped the feet she was so blest to touch;
And He wiped off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul, because she loved so much.

I am a sinner, full of doubts and fears,—
Make me a humble thing of love and tears!

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL

1797-1835

I'VE PLUCKED THE BERRY

I'VE plucked the berry from the bush, the brown
nut from the tree,
But heart of happy little bird ne'er broken was by
me;

I saw them in their curious nests, close couching,
slyly peer,
With their wild eyes, like glittering beads, to note
if harm were near:

I passed them by, and blessed them all; I felt that
it was good

To leave unmoved the creatures small whose home
is in the wood.

And here, even now, above my head, a lusty rogue
doth sing,

He pecks his swelling breast and neck, and trims
his little wing,

He will not fly; he knows full well, while chirping
on that spray,

I would not harm him for a world, or interrupt his
lay;

Sing on, sing on, blithe bird! and fill my heart with
summer gladness,

It has been aching many a day with measures full
of sadness!

JEANIE MORRISON

I'VE wandered east, I've wandered west,

Through mony a weary way;

But never, never can forget

The luve o' life's young day!

The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en
 May weel be black gin Yule;
 But blacker fa' awaits the heart
 Where first fond luvè grows cule.

Oh dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 The thochts o' bygone years
 Still fling their shadows ower my path,
 And blind my een wi' tears!
 They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
 And sair and sick I pine,
 As memory idly summons up
 The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
 'Twas then we twa did part;
 Sweet time—sad time! twa bairns at scule
 Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
 'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
 To leir ilk ither lear,
 And tones, and looks, and smiles were shed,
 Remembered evermair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet,
 When sitting on that bink,
 Cheek touchin' cheek, loof locked in loof,
 What our wee heads could think?
 When baith bent doun ower ae braid page,
 Wi' ae buik on our knee,
 Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
 My lesson was in thee.

Beltane] Festival held in May.	saut] salt.	laigh
bink] low bench.	leir] learn.	lear] learning.
loof] palm of the hand.		

Oh, mind ye how we hung our heads,
 How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
 Whene'er the scule-weans laughin' said,
 We cleeked thegither hame?
 And mind ye o' the Saturdays,
 (The scule then skailt at noon),
 When we ran aff to speel the braes—
 The bloomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
 My heart flows like a sea,
 As ane by ane the thochts rush back
 O' sculetime and o' thee.
 Oh, mornin' life! oh, mornin' luve!
 Oh lichtsome days and lang,
 When hinnied hopes around our hearts
 Like summer blossoms sprang!

Oh mind ye, luve, how aft we left
 The deavin' dinsome toun,
 To wander by the green burnside,
 And hear its waters croon?
 The simmer leaves hung ower our heads,
 The flowers burst round our feet,
 And in the gloamin' o' the wood,
 The throssil whusslit sweet;

The throssil whusslit in the wood,
 The burn sang to the trees,
 And we with Nature's heart in tune,
 Concerted harmonies;

brent] burnt.	cleeked] clung.	skailt] scattered.
speel] climb.	braes] hill-slopes.	hinnied] honeyed.
deavin'] deafening.	dinsome] noisy.	croon] murmur.
whusslit] whistled.		

And on the knowe abune the burn,
For hours thegither sat
In the silentest o' Joy, till baith
Wi' very gladness grat.

Ay, ay, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Tears trinkled doun your cheek,
Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessed time,
When hearts were fresh and young,
When freely gushed all feelings forth,
Unsyllabled—unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
Gin I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts,
As ye hae been to me?
Oh! tell me gin their music fills
Thine ear as it does mine;
Oh! say gin e'er your heart grows grit
Wi' dreamings o' langsyne?

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
I've borne a weary lot;
But in my wanderings, far or near,
Ye never were forgot.
The fount that first burst frae this heart,
Still travels on its way;
And channels deeper as it rins
The luve o' life's young day.

knowe] knoll.
grit] heavy.

abune] above.

grat] wept.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 Since we were sindered young,
 I've never seen your face, nor heard
 The music o' your tongue;
 But I could hug all wretchedness,
 And happy could I dee,
 Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
 O' bygane days and me!

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY

1797-1839

TILL GREEN LEAVES COME AGAIN

O WHERE do fairies hide their heads
 When snow lies on the hills,
 When frost has spoiled their mossy beds,
 And crystallized their rills?
 Beneath the moon they cannot trip
 In circles o'er the plain,
 And draughts of dew they cannot sip
 Till green leaves come again.
 Perhaps in small blue diving-bells
 They plunge beneath the waves,
 Inhabiting the wreathèd shells
 That lie in coral caves.
 Perhaps in red Vesuvius
 Carousal they maintain;
 And cheer their little spirits thus
 Till green leaves come again.
 Or maybe in soft garments rolled,
 In hollow trees they lie,
 And sing when nestled from the cold
 To while the season by.

sindered] sundered.

dee] die.

There while they sleep in pleasant trance,
'Neath mossy counterpane,
In dreams they weave some fairy dance,
Till green leaves come again.

When they return there will be mirth
And music in the air,
And fairy rings upon the earth,
And mischief everywhere.
The maids, to keep the elves aloof,
Will bar the doors in vain;
No key-hole will be fairy proof
When green leaves come again.

A NOVEL OF HIGH LIFE

LORD HARRY has written a novel,
A story of elegant life:
No stuff about love in a hovel,
No sketch of a commoner's wife:
No trash, such as pathos and passion,
Fine feelings, expression and wit;
But all about people of fashion,
Come look at his caps—how they fit!

O Radcliffe! thou once wert the charmer
Of girls who sat reading all night;
Thy heroes were striplings in armour,
Thy heroines damsels in white.
But past are thy terrible touches,
Our lips in derision we curl,
Unless we are told how a Duchess
Conversed with her cousin the Earl.

We now have each dialogue quite full
Of titles—'I give you my word,

My lady, you're looking delightful.'
 'O dear, do you think so, my lord!'
 'You've heard of the Marquis's marriage,
 The bride with her jewels new set,
 Four horses, new travelling carriage,
 And *déjeûner à la fourchette*.'

Haut Ton finds her privacy broken,
 We trace all her ins and her outs;
 The very small talk that is spoken
 By very great people at routs.
 At Tenby Miss Jinks asks the loan of
 The book from the innkeeper's wife,
 And reads till she dreams she is one of
 The leaders of elegant life.

THOMAS HOOD

1799-1845

THE DEATH-BED

WE watched her breathing thro' the night,
 Her breathing soft and low,
 As in her breast the wave of life
 Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
 So slowly moved about,
 As we had lent her half our powers
 To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
 Our fears our hopes belied—
 We thought her dying when she slept,
 And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

AUTUMN

I SAW old Autumn in the misty morn
Stand shadowless like Silence, listening
To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;—
Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

Where are the songs of Summer?—With the sun,
Oping the dusky eyelids of the south,
Till shade and silence waken up as one,
And Morning sings with a warm odorous mouth.
Where are the merry birds?—Away, away,
On panting wings through the inclement skies,
Lest owls should prey
Undazzled at noonday,
And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

Where are the blooms of Summer?—In the west,
Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,
When the mild Eve by sudden Night is prest
Like tearful Proserpine, snatched from her flowers
To a most gloomy breast.

Where is the pride of Summer,—the green prime,—
The many, many leaves all twinkling?—Three
On the mossed elm; three on the naked lime
Trembling,—and one upon the old oak-tree!

Where is the Dryad's immortality?—
Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew,
Or wearing the long gloomy Winter through
In the smooth holly's green eternity.

The squirrel gloats on his accomplished hoard,
The ants have brimmed their garners with ripe
grain,

And honey bees have stored
The sweets of Summer in their luscious cells;
The swallows all have winged across the main;
But here the Autumn melancholy dwells,
And sighs her tearful spells
Amongst the sunless shadows of the plain.

Alone, alone,
Upon a mossy stone,
She sits and reckons up the dead and gone
With the last leaves for a love-rosary,
Whilst all the withered world looks drearily,
Like a dim picture of the drownèd past
In the hushed mind's mysterious far away,
Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last
Into that distance, grey upon the grey.

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershaded
Under the languid downfall of her hair:
She wears a coronal of flowers faded
Upon her forehead, and a face of care;—
There is enough of withered everywhere
To make her bower,—and enough of gloom;
There is enough of sadness to invite,
If only for the rose that died, whose doom
Is Beauty's,—she that with the living bloom
Of conscious cheeks most beautifies the light:
There is enough of sorrowing, and quite

Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear,—
 Enough of chilly droppings for her bowl;
 Enough of fear and shadowy despair,
 To frame her cloudy prison for the soul!

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT

With fingers weary and worn,
 With eyelids heavy and red,
 A Woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
 Plying her needle and thread—
 Stitch! stitch! stitch!
 In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
 And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
 She sang the 'Song of the Shirt!'
 'Work! work! work!
 While the cock is crowing aloof!
 And work—work—work,
 Till the stars shine through the roof!
 It's O! to be a slave
 Along with the barbarous Turk,
 Where woman has never a soul to save,
 If this is Christian work!
 'Work—work—work
 Till the brain begins to swim;
 Work—work—work
 Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
 Seam, and gusset, and band,
 Band, and gusset, and seam,
 Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
 And sew them on in a dream!
 'O! Men with Sisters dear!
 O! Men! with Mothers and Wives!
 It is not linen you're wearing out,
 But human creatures' lives!

Stitch—stitch—stitch,
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

‘But why do I talk of Death?
That Phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear his terrible shape,
It seems so like my own—
It seems so like my own,
Because of the fasts I keep,
Oh! God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!

‘Work—work—work!
My labour never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread—and rags.
That shattered roof,—and this naked floor—
A table—a broken chair—
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there!

‘Work—work—work!
From weary chime to chime,
Work—work—work—
As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumbed,
As well as the weary hand.

‘Work—work—work,
In the dull December light,
And work—work—work,
When the weather is warm and bright—

While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.

‘Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet—
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet,
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal!

‘Oh but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!’

Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Work, work, work,
Like the Engine that works by Steam!
A mere machine of iron and wood
That toils for Mammon’s sake—
Without a brain to ponder and craze
Or a heart to feel—and break!

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,

A Woman sat in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread,—
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,
Would that its tone could reach the Rich!—
She sang this 'Song of the Shirt!'

QUEEN MAB

A LITTLE fairy comes at night,
Her eyes are blue, her hair is brown,
With silver spots upon her wings,
And from the moon she flutters down.
She has a little silver wand,
And when a good child goes to bed
She waves her wand from right to left,
And makes a circle round its head.
And then it dreams of pleasant things,
Of fountains filled with fairy fish,
And trees that bear delicious fruit,
And bow their branches at a wish:
Of arbours filled with dainty scents
From lovely flowers that never fade;
Bright flies that glitter in the sun,
And glow-worms shining in the shade.
And talking birds with gifted tongues,
For singing songs and telling tales,
And pretty dwarfs to show the way
Through fairy hills and fairy dales.
But when a bad child goes to bed,
From left to right she weaves her rings,
And then it dreams all through the night
Of only ugly horrid things!

Then lions come with glaring eyes,
And tigers growl, a dreadful noise,
And ogres draw their cruel knives,
To shed the blood of girls and boys.

Then stormy waves rush on to drown,
Or raging flames come scorching round,
Fierce dragons hover in the air,
And serpents crawl along the ground.

Then wicked children wake and weep,
And wish the long black gloom away;
But good ones love the dark, and find
The night as pleasant as the day.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

ONE more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,

Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny

Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
O, it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
 Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
 Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
 With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
 Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
 Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
 Swift to be hurled—
Anywhere, anywhere
 Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly—
No matter how coldly
 The rough river ran—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
 Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
 Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

OUR VILLAGE—BY A VILLAGER

‘Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain.’—*Goldsmith*.

OUR village, that’s to say not Miss Mitford’s village,
but our village of Bullock Smithy,

Is come into by an avenue of trees, three oak pol-
lards, two elders, and a withy;

And in the middle, there’s a green of about not
exceeding an acre and a half;

It’s common to all, and fed off by nineteen cows,
six ponies, three horses, five asses, two foals,
seven pigs, and a calf!

Besides a pond in the middle, as is held by a similar
sort of common law lease,

And contains twenty ducks, six drakes, three
ganders, two dead dogs, four drowned kittens,
and twelve geese.

Of course the green’s cropt very close, and does
famous for bowling when the little village boys
play at cricket;

Only some horse, or pig, or cow, or great jackass,
is sure to come and stand right before the
wicket.

There’s fifty-five private houses, let alone barns and
workshops, and pigsties, and poultry huts, and
suchlike sheds;

With plenty of public-houses—two Foxes, one
Green Man, three Bunch of Grapes, one Crown,
and six King’s Heads.

The Green Man is reckoned the best, as the only
one that for love or money can raise

A postilion, a blue jacket, two deplorable lame
white horses, and a ramshackled ‘neat post-
chaise’.

There's one parish church for all the people, whatsoever may be their ranks in life or their degrees,

Except one very damp, small, dark, freezing-cold, little Methodist chapel of Ease;

And close by the church-yard there's a stone-mason's yard, that when the time is seasonable

Will furnish with afflictions sore and marble urns and cherubims very low and reasonable.

There's a cage, comfortable enough; I've been in it with old Jack Jeffrey and Tom Pike;

For the Green Man next door will send you in ale, gin, or anything else you like.

I can't speak of the stocks, as nothing remains of them but the upright post;

But the pound is kept in repairs for the sake of Cob's horse, as is always there almost.

There's a smithy of course, where that queer sort of a chap in his way, Old Joe Bradley,

Perpetually hammers and stammers, for he stutters and shoes horses very badly.

There's a shop of all sorts, that sells everything, kept by the widow of Mr. Task;

But when you go there it's ten to one she's out of everything you ask.

You'll know her house by the swarm of boys, like flies, about the old sugary cask;

There are six empty houses, and not so well papered inside as out,

For bill-stickers won't beware, but sticks notices of sales and election placards all about.

That's the Doctor's with a green door, where the garden pots in the windows is seen;

A weakly monthly rose that don't blow, and a dead geranium, and a tea-plant with five black leaves and one green.

As for hollyoaks at the cottage doors, and honeysuckles and jasmines, you may go and whistle; But the Tailor's front garden grows two cabbages, a dock, a ha'porth of penny-royal, two dandelions, and a thistle.

There are three small orchards—Mr. Busby's the schoolmaster's is the chief—

With two pear-trees that don't bear; one plum and an apple, that every year is stripped by a thief.

There's another small day-school too, kept by the respectable Mrs. Gaby.

A select establishment, for six little boys and one big, and four little girls and a baby;

There's a rectory, with pointed gables and strange odd chimneys that never smokes,

For the rector don't live on his living like other Christian sort of folks;

There's a barber's, once a week well filled with rough black-bearded, shock-headed churls,

And a window with two feminine men's heads, and two masculine ladies in false curls;

There's a butcher's, and a carpenter's, and a plumber's, and a small greengrocer's, and a baker,

But he won't bake on a Sunday, and there's a sexton that's a coal-merchant besides, and an undertaker;

And a toy-shop, but not a whole one, for a village can't compare with the London shops;

One window sells drums, dolls, kites, carts, bats, Clout's balls, and the other sells malt and hops.

And Mrs. Brown, in domestic economy not to be
a bit behind her betters,
Lets her house to a milliner, a watchmaker, a rat-
catcher, a cobbler, lives in it herself, and it's
the post-office for letters.
Now I've gone through all the village—ay, from
end to end, save and except one more house,
But I haven't come to that—and I hope I never
shall—and that's the Village Poor House!

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

I REMEMBER, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon
Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups—
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birth-day,—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;

My spirit flew in feathers then
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM

'Twas in the prime of summer time,
An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
Came bounding out of school:
There were some that ran and some that leapt,
Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
And souls untouched by sin;
To a level mead they came, and there
They drave the wickets in:
Pleasantly shone the setting sun
Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran,—
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can;
But the Usher sat remote from all,
A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch heaven's blessèd breeze;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease:
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees!

Leaf after leaf, he turned it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside,
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide:
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome,
With a fast and fervent grasp
He strained the dusky covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp:
'Oh, God! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp!'

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took,—
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook,—
And, lo! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book!

'My gentle lad, what is't you read—
Romance or fairy fable?
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable?'
The young boy gave an upward glance,—
'It is "The Death of Abel".'

The Usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain,—
Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talked with him of Cain;

And, long since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves;
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves;
Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod,—
Ay, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God!

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,—
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain:
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain!

‘And well,’ quoth he, ‘I know, for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme,—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe,—
Who spill life’s sacred stream!
For why? Methought, last night, I wrought
A murder, in a dream!’

‘One that had never done me wrong—
A feeble man, and old;
I led him to a lonely field,—
The moon shone clear and cold:
Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold!

‘Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife,—
And then the deed was done:
There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone!

‘Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill;
And yet I feared him all the more,
For lying there so still:
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill!

‘And, lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame;—
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame:
I took the dead man by his hand,
And called upon his name!

‘Oh, God! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain!
But when I touched the lifeless clay,
The blood gushed out amain!
For every clot, a burning spot,
Was scorching in my brain!

'My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the Devil's price:
A dozen times I groaned; the dead
Had never groaned but twice!

'And now, from forth the frowning sky,
From the Heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice—the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging Sprite:—
"Thou guilty man! take up thy dead,
And hide it from my sight!"

'I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream,—
A sluggish water, black as ink,
The depth was so extreme:—
My gentle Boy, remember this
Is nothing but a dream!

'Down went the corse with a hollow plunge,
And vanished in the pool;
Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young
That evening in the school.

'Oh, Heaven, to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in Evening Hymn:
Like a Devil of the Pit, I seemed,
'Mid holy Cherubim!

‘And Peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread;
But Guilt was my grim Chamberlain
That lighted me to bed;
And drew my midnight curtains round
With fingers bloody red!

‘All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep;
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at Sleep:
For Sin had rendered unto her
The keys of Hell to keep!

‘All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
That racked me all the time,—
A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime!

‘One stern tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave;
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,—
Still urging me to go and see
The Dead Man in his grave!

‘Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursèd pool
With a wild misgiving eye;
And I saw the Dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry!

‘Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dew-drop from its wing;
But I never marked its morning flight,
I never heard it sing:
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

‘With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran;—
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began:
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murdered man!

‘And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was other where;
As soon as the mid-day task was done,
In secret I was there:
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare!

‘Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep:
Or land, or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

‘So wills the fierce avenging Sprite,
Till blood for blood atones!
Ay, though he’s buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh,—
The world shall see his bones!

'Oh, God! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake!
Again—again, with a dizzy brain,
The human life I take;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake.
'And still no peace for the restless clay,
Will wave or mould allow;
The horrid thing pursues my soul,—
It stands before me now!'
The fearful Boy looked up, and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.
That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

BALLAD

TIME OF ROSES

It was not in the winter
Our loving lot was cast!
It was the time of roses,
We plucked them as we passed!
That churlish season never frowned
On early lovers yet!—
Oh no—the world was newly crowned
With flowers, when first we met.
'Twas twilight, and I bade you go,
But still you held me fast;—
It was the time of roses,—
We plucked them as we passed!

What else could peer my glowing cheek
That tears began to stud?—
And when I asked the like of Love
You snatched a damask bud,—

And oped it to the dainty core
Still glowing to the last:—
It was the time of roses,
We plucked them as we passed!

FAIR INES

O SAW ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivalled bright;
And blessèd will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whispered thee so near!

Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore:
It would have been a beauteous dream,—
If it had been no more!

Alas, alas! fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,
To her you've loved so long.
Farewell, farewell, fair Ines!
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blessed one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

STANZAS WRITTEN IN SICKNESS

FAREWELL, Life! My senses swim;
And the world is growing dim;
Thronging shadows cloud the light,
Like the advent of the night,—

Colder, colder, colder still
Upward steals a vapour chill—
Strong the earthy odour grows—
I smell the Mould above the Rose!

Welcome, Life! the Spirit strives!
Strength returns, and hope revives;
Cloudy fears and shapes forlorn
Fly like shadows at the morn,—
O'er the earth there comes a bloom—
Sunny light for sullen gloom,
Warm perfume for vapour cold—
I smell the Rose above the Mould!

RUTH

SHE stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripened;—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veiled a light,
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks:—

Sure, I said, Heaven did not mean,
 Where I reap thou shouldst but glean,
 Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
 Share my harvest and my home.

WILLIAM THOM

1798-1848

THE BLIND BOY'S PRANKS

MEN grew sae cauld, maids sae unkind,
 Love kentna whaur to stay:
 Wi' fient an arrow, bow, or string—
 Wi' droopin' heart an' drizzled wing,
 He faught his lonely way.

'Is there nae mair in Garioch fair
 Ae spotless hame for me?
 Hae politics an' corn an' kye
 Ilk bosom stappit? Fie, O fie!
 I'll swithe me o'er the sea.'

He launched a leaf o' jessamine,
 On whilk he daur'd to swim,
 An' pillowed his head on a wee rosebud,
 Syne laithfu', lanely, Love 'gan scud
 Down Ury's waefu' stream.

The birds sang bonnie as Love drew near,
 But dowie when he gaed by;
 Till lull'd wi' the sough o' monie a sang,
 He sleepit fu' soun' and sailed alang
 'Neath Heaven's gowden sky.

kentna] knew not. wi' fient an arrow] with deuce an
 arrow. swithe me] away quickly. laithfu'] regretful.
 dowie] sadly.

'Twas just whaur creeping Ury greets
 Its mountain cousin Don,
 There wandered forth a weelfaured dame,
 Wha listless gazed on the bonnie stream,
 As it flirted an' played with a sunny beam
 That flickered its bosom upon.

Love happit his head, I trow, that time
 The jessamine bark drew nigh,
 The lassie espied the wee rosebud,
 An' aye her heart gae thud for thud,
 An' quiet it wadna lie.

'O gin I but had yon wearie wee flower
 That floats on the Ury sae fair!—
 She lootit her hand for the silly rose-leaf,
 But little wist she o' the pawkie thief
 That was lurkin' an' laughin' there!

Love glowered when he saw her bonnie dark e'e,
 An' swore by Heaven's grace
 He ne'er had seen nor thought to see,
 Since e'er he left the Paphian lea,
 Sae lovely a dwallin'-place.

Syne first of a' in her blythesome breast
 He built a bower, I ween;
 An' what did the waefu' devilick neist?
 But kindled a gleam like the rosy east,
 That sparkled frae baith her e'en.

An' then beneath ilk high e'e-bree
 He placed a quiver there;
 His bow? What but her shinin' brow?
 An' O sic deadly strings he drew
 Frae out her silken hair!

weelfaur'd] well-favoured. happit] covered. lootit]
 lowered. pawkie]sly. neist]next. e'e-bree]eyebrow.

Guid be our guard! Sic deeds waur deen
 Roun' a' our countrie then;
 An' monie a hangin' lug was seen
 'Mang farmers fat, an' lawyers lean,
 An' herds o' common men!
 lug] ear.

THE MITHERLESS BAIRN

WHEN a' ither bairnies are hushed to their hame,
 By aunty or cousin, or frecky grand-dame,
 Wha stans last and lanely, an' naebody carin'?
 'Tis the puir doited loonie—the mitherless bairn.

The mitherless bairn gangs till his lane bed,
 Nane covers his cauld back, or haps his bare head;
 His wee hackit heelies are hard as the airn,
 An' litheless the lair o' the mitherless bairn.

O speak him nae harshly—he trembles the while,
 He bends to your bidding, and blesses your smile!
 In their dark hour o' anguish the heartless shall
 learn

That God deals the blow for the mitherless bairn.
 doited] stupid. litheless] comfortless.

MARY HOWITT

1799–1888

A SPRING SONG

SEE the yellow catkins cover
 All the slender willows over;
 And on mossy banks so green
 Star-like primroses are seen;
 And their clustering leaves below
 White and purple violets grow.

Hark the little lambs are bleating,
And the cawing rooks are meeting
In the elms—a noisy crowd;
And all birds are singing loud,
There, the first white butterfly
In the sun goes flitting by!

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

LORD MACAULAY

1800–1859

HORATIUS

A LAY MADE ABOUT THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCLX

I

LARS PORSENA of Clusium

By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

II

East and west and south and north
The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

III

The horsemen and the footmen
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place;
From many a fruitful plain;
From many a lonely hamlet,
Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of purple Apennine;

IV

From lordly Volaterrae,
Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
For godlike kings of old;
From seagirt Populonia,
Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
Fringing the southern sky;

V

From the proud mart of Pisae,
Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
Through corn and vines and flowers;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

VI

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill;

Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear ;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

VII

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill ;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill ;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer ;
Unharm'd the water fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

VIII

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap,
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep ;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

IX

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand :
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

X

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
'Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven;
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome.'

XI

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten:
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day.

XII

For all the Etruscan armies
Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following
To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.

XIII

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
To Rome men took their flight.

A mile around the city,
The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

XIV

For aged folks on crutches,
And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
That clung to them and smiled.
And sick men borne in litters
High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sun-burned husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves,

XV

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of waggons
That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

XVI

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

XVII

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

XVIII

I wis, in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

XIX

They held a council standing
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
'The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Nought else can save the town.'

XX

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;
'To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here.'

On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

XXI

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

XXII

And plainly and more plainly,
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

XXIII

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest
Each warlike Lucumo.

There Cilnius of Arretium

On his fleet roan was seen ;
And Astur of the four-fold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

XXIV

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name ;
And by the left false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

XXV

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

XXVI

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.

‘Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?’

XXVII

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
‘To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods,

XXVIII

‘And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?’

XXIX

‘Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?’

XXX

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
'Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee.'
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
'I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee.'

XXXI

'Horatius,' quoth the Consul,
'As thou sayest, so let it be.'
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

XXXII

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

XXXIII

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.

As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold:
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

XXXIV

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

XXXV

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

XXXVI

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:

And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way;

XXXVII

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that grey crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

XXXVIII

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath:
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth:
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

XXXIX

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,

Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

XL

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
'Lie there,' he cried, 'fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice accursed sail.'

XLI

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamour
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

XLII

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.

Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

XLIII

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, 'The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?'

XLIV

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gasped his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

XLV

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face:
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

XLVI

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

XLVII

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
'And see,' he cried, 'the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?'

XLVIII

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

XLIX

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three:

And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

L

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried 'Forward!'
And those before cried 'Back!'
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

LI

Yet one man for one moment
Stood out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud,
'Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
Here lies the road to Rome.'

LII

Thrice looked he at the city;
Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread:

And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

LIII

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
'Come back, come back, Horatius!'
Loud cried the Fathers all.
'Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!'

LIV

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

LV

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

LVI

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

LVII

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
'Down with him!' cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
'Now yield thee,' cried Lars Porsena,
'Now yield thee to our grace.'

LVIII

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

LIX

'Oh, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!'

So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

LX

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

LXI

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armour,
And spent with changing blows;
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

LXII

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
Bore bravely up his chin.

LXIII

‘Curse on him!’ quoth false Sextus;
 ‘Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
 We should have sacked the town!’
‘Heaven help him!’ quoth Lars Porsena,
 ‘And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
 Was never seen before.’

LXIV

And now he feels the bottom;
 Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
 To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
 And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
 Borne by the joyous crowd.

LXV

They gave him of the corn-land,
 That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
 Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
 And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
 To witness if I lie.

LXVI

It stands in the Comitium,
 Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
 Halting upon one knee:

And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LXVII

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

LXVIII

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

LXIX

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

LXX

When the goodman mends his armour,
And trims his helmet's plume ;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom ;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-
NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERJEANT IN IRETON'S
REGIMENT

OH! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the
North,

With your hands, and your feet, and your rai-
ment all red ?

And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous
shout ?

And whence be the grapes of the wine-press
which ye tread ?

Oh evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we
trod ;

For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and
the strong,

Who sate in the high places and slew the saints
of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June
That we saw their banners dance and their
cuirasses shine,

And the Man of Blood was there, with his long
 essenced hair,
 And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of
 the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his
 sword,
 The General rode along us to form us for the fight,
 When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled
 into a shout,
 Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's
 right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
 The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
 For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the
 Laws!
 For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the
 Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and
 his drums,
 His bravoes of Alsatia and pages of Whitehall;
 They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes:
 —close your ranks:—
 For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here:—they rush on.—We are broken:—
 we are gone:—
 Our left is borne before them like stubble on the
 blast.
 O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the
 right!
 Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it
 to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound:—the centre hath
given ground:—

Hark! hark!—What means the trampling of
horsemen on our rear?

Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God,
'tis he, boys.

Bear up another minute. Brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a
row,

Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on
the dykes,

Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the
Accurst,

And at a shock have scattered the forest of his
pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to
hide

Their coward heads, predestined to rot on
Temple-Bar,

And he—he turns, he flies,—shame on those cruel
eyes

That bore to look on torture, and dare not look
on war.

Ho! comrades, scour the plain: and, ere ye strip the
slain,

First give another stab to make your quest
secure,

Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-
pieces and lockets,

The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the
poor.

Fools, your doublets shone with gold, and your
 hearts were gay and bold,
 When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans
 to-day;
 And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in
 the rocks,
 Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the
 prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven
 and hell and fate,
 And the fingers that once were so busy with your
 blades,
 Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your
 oaths,
 Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your dia-
 monds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the
 crown,
 With the Belial of the court, and the Mammon
 of the Pope;
 There is woe in Oxford Halls: there is wail in
 Durham's Stalls:
 The Jesuit smites his bosom: the Bishop rends
 his cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's
 ills,
 And tremble when she thinks on the edge of
 England's sword;
 And the Kings of earth in fear, shall shudder when
 they hear
 What the hand of God hath wrought for the
 Houses and the Word.

THE ARMADA

A FRAGMENT

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble England's
praise;
I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in
ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in
vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of
Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to
Plymouth Bay;
Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond
Aurigny's isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many
a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial
grace;
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close
in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along
the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's
lofty hall;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the
coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland
many a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old
sheriff comes;
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him
sound the drums;

His yeomen round the market cross make clear an
ample space;
For there behoves him to set up the standard of
Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance
the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon
swells.
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient
crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies
down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that
famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Caesar's
eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned
to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho!
scatter flowers, fair maids:
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw
your blades:
Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft
her wide;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our
pride.
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty
scroll of gold;
Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the
purple sea,

Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er
again shall be.

From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to
Milford Bay,

That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the
day;

For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-
flame spread,

High on St. Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on
Beachy Head.

Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each
southern shire,

Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire.

The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
waves:

The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's
sunless caves:

O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the
fiery herald flew:

He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers
of Beaulieu.

Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out
from Bristol town,

And ere the day three hundred horse had met on
Clifton down;

The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into
the night,

And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
blood-red light,

Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike
silence broke,

And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city
woke.

At once on all her stately gates arose the answering
fires ;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling
spires ;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the
voice of fear ;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a
louder cheer ;
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed
down each roaring street ;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still
the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came
spurring in :
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the
warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant
squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those
bright couriers forth ;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they
started for the north ;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they
bounded still :
All night from tower to tower they sprang ; they
sprang from hill to hill :
Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's
rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills
of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
lonely height,

Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's
crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's
stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the
boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale
of Trent;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's
embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers
of Carlisle.

* * * * *

EPITAPH ON A JACOBITE

To my true king I offered, free from stain,
Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain.
For him I threw lands, honours, wealth, away,
And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep;
Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting-place I asked, an early grave.
O thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

THE LAST BUCCANEER

THE winds were yelling, the waves were swelling,
The sky was black and drear,
When the crew with eyes of flame brought the ship
without a name
Alongside the last Buccaneer.

‘Whence flies your sloop full sail before so fierce a gale,
When all others drive bare on the seas?
Say, come ye from the shore of the holy Salvador,
Or the gulf of the rich Caribbees?’

‘From a shore no search hath found, from a gulf no
line can sound,
Without rudder or needle we steer;
Above, below, our bark, dies the sea-fowl and the
shark,
As we fly by the last Buccaneer.

‘To-night there shall be heard on the rocks of Cape
de Verde,
A loud crash, and a louder roar;
And to-morrow shall the deep, with a heavy moan-
ing, sweep
The corpses and wreck to the shore.’

The stately ship of Clyde securely now may ride,
In the breath of the citron shades;
And Severn’s towering mast securely now flies fast,
Through the sea of the balmy Trades.

From St. Jago’s wealthy port, from Havannah’s
royal fort,
The seaman goes forth without fear;
For since that stormy night not a mortal hath had
sight
Of the flag of the last Buccaneer.

WILLIAM BARNES

1801-1886

THE WIFE A-LOST

SINCE I noo mwore do zee your feäce,
 Up steäirs or down below,
 I'll zit me in the lwonesome pleäce
 Where flat-bough'd beech do grow:
 Below the beeches' bough, my love,
 Where you did never come,
 An' I don't look to meet ye now,
 As I do look at hwome.

Since you noo mwore be at my zide,
 In walks in zummer het,
 I'll goo alwone where mist do ride,
 Drough trees a-drippèn wet:
 Below the rain-wet bough, my love,
 Where you did never come,
 An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,
 As I do grieve at hwome.

Since now bezide my dinner-bwoard
 Your vaice do never sound,
 I'll eat the bit I can avword
 A-vield upon the ground;
 Below the darksome bough, my love,
 Where you did never dine,
 An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,
 As I at hwome do pine.

Since I do miss your vaice an' feäce
 In prayèr at eventide,
 I'll pray wi' woone sad vaice vor greäce
 To goo where you do bide;

het]heat. alwone]alone. avword]afford. woone]one.

Above the tree an' bough, my love,
 Where you be gone avore,
 An' be a waitèn vor me now,
 To come vor evermwore.

BLACKMWORE MAIDENS

THE primrrose in the sheåde do blow,
 The cowslip in the zun,
 The thyme upon the down do grow,
 The clote where streams do run;
 An' where do pretty maïdens grow
 An' blow, but where the tow'r
 Do rise among the bricken tuns,
 In Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you could zee their comely gaît,
 An' pretty feäces' smiles,
 A-trippèn on so light o' waïght,
 An' steppèn off the stiles;
 A-gwaïn to church, as bells do swing
 An' ring within the tow'r,
 You'd own the pretty maidens' pleäce
 Is Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you vrom Wimborne took your road,
 To Stower or Paladore,
 An' all the farmers' housen show'd
 Their daughters at the door;
 You'd cry to bachelors at hwome—
 'Here, come: 'ithin an hour
 You'll vind ten maidens to your mind,
 In Blackmwore by the Stour.'

clote] yellow water-lily. bricken] brick-built. tuns]
 chimneys. waïght] weight.

An' if you look'd 'ithin their door,
 To zee em in their pleäce,
 A-doèn housework up avore
 Their smilen mother's feäce;
 You'd cry—'Why, if a man would wive
 An' thrive, 'ithout a dow'r,
 Then let en look en out a wife
 In Blackmwore by the Stour.'

As I upon my road did pass
 A school-house back in Maÿ,
 There out upon the beäten grass
 Wer maïdens at their play;̃
 An' as the pretty souls did tveil
 An' smile, I cried, 'The flow'r
 O' beauty, then, is still in bud
 In Blackmwore by the Stour.'

tveil] toil.

WOAK HILL

WHEN sycamore leaves wer a-spreadèn
 Green-ruddy in hedges,
 Bezide the red doust o' the ridges,
 A-dried at Woak Hill;

I pack'd up my goods, all a-sheenèn
 Wi' long years o' handlen,
 On dousty red wheels ov a waggon,
 To ride at Woak Hill.

The brown thatchen rwof o' the dwellèn
 I then wer a-leävèn,
 Had shelter'd the sleek head o' Meäry,
 My bride at Woak Hill.

Woak] Oak. doust] dust. a-sheenèn] shining. rwof]
 roof.

But now vor zome years, her light voot-vall
 'S a-lost vrom the vlorèn.
 Too soon vor my jaÿ an' my childern
 She died at Woak Hill.

But still I do think that, in soul,
 She do hover about us;
 To ho vor her motherless childern,
 Her pride at Woak Hill.

Zoo—lest she should tell me herea'ter
 I stole off 'ithout her,
 An' left her, uncall'd at house-riddèn,
 To bide at Woak Hill—

I call'd her so fondly, wi' lippèns
 All soundless to others,
 An' took her wi' aïr-reachèn hand
 To my zide at Woak Hill.

On the road I did look round, a-talkèn
 To light at my shoulder,
 An' then led her in at the doorway,
 Miles wide vrom Woak Hill.

An' that's why vo'k thought, vor a season,
 My mind wer a-wandrèn
 Wi' sorrow, when I wer so sorely
 A-tried at Woak Hill.

But no; that my Meäry mid never
 Behold herzelf slighted,
 I wanted to think that I guided
 My guide vrom Woak Hill.

jaÿ] joy.	To ho vor] To care for.	house-riddèn]
moving house.	lippèns] lip-movements.	To light] To
vacancy.	mid] might.	

THE WIND AT THE DOOR

As day did darken on the dewless grass,
 There, still, wi' nwone a-come by me
 To stay a-while at hwome by me
 Within the house, all dumb by me,
 I zot me sad as the eventide did pass.

An' there a win'blast shook the rattlèn door,
 An' seemed, as win' did mwone without,
 As if my Jeäne, alwone without,
 A-stannèn on the stwone without,
 Wer there a-come wi' happiness oonce mwore.

I went to door; an' out vrom trees above
 My head, upon the blast by me,
 Sweet blossoms wer a-cast by me,
 As if my Love, a-past by me,
 Did fling em down—a token ov her love.

'Sweet blossoms o' the tree where I do murn,'
 I thought, 'if you did blow vor her,
 Vor apples that should grow vor her,
 A-vallen down below vor her,
 O then how happy I should zee you kern!'

But no. Too soon I voun my charm a-broke.
 Noo comely soul in white like her—
 Noo soul a-steppen light like her—
 An' nwone o' comely height like her
 Went by; but all my grief ageän awoke.

kern] change to fruit.

THE LILAC

DEAR lilac-tree, a-spreadèn wide
 Thy purple blooth on ev'ry zide,
 As if the hollow sky did shed
 Its blue upon thy flow'ry head;

Oh! whether I mud sheäre wi' thee
Thy open aïr, my bloomèn tree,
Or zee thy blossoms vrom the gloom,
'Ithin my zunless workèn-room,
My heart do leäp, but leäp wi' sighs,
At zight o' thee avore my eyes,
For when thy grey-blue head do swaÿ
In cloudless light, 'tis Spring, 'tis Maÿ.

'Tis Spring, 'tis Maÿ, as Maÿ woonce shed
His glowèn light above my head—
When thy green boughs, wi' bloomy tips,
Did sheäde my children's laughèn lips;
A-screenèn vrom the noonday gleäre
Their rwozy cheäks an' glossy heäir;
The while their mother's needle sped,
Too quick vor zight, the snow-white thread,
Unless her han', wi' loven ceäre,
Did smooth their little heads o' heäir;
Or wi' a sheäke, tie up anew
Vor zome wild voot, a slippèn shoe;
An' I did leän beside thy mound
Ageän the deäsy-dappled ground,
The while the woaken clock did tick
My hour o' rest away too quick,
An' call me off to work anew,
Wi' slowly-ringèn strokes, woone, two.

Zoo let me zee noo darksome cloud
Bedim to-day thy flow'ry sh'oud,
But let en bloom on ev'ry spraÿ,
Drough all the days o' zunny Maÿ.

sh'oud] branches.

THE BLACKBIRD

Ov all the birds upon the wing
 Between the zunny show'rs o' spring,—
 Vor all the lark, a-swingèn high,
 Mid zing sweet ditties to the sky,
 An' sparrows, clust'rèn roun' the bough,
 Mid chatter to the men at plough,—
 The blackbird, whisslèn in among
 The boughs, do zing the gayest zong.

Vor we do hear the blackbird zing
 His sweetest ditties in the spring,
 When nippen win's noo mwore do blow
 Vrom northern skies, wi' sleet or snow,
 But drêve light doust along between
 The leäne-zide hedges, thick an' green;
 An' zoo the blackbird in among
 The boughs do zing the gayest zong.
 'Tis blithe, wi' newly-wakèn eyes,
 To zee the mornèn's ruddy skies;
 Or, out a-haulèn frith or lops
 Vrom new-plêsh'd hedge or new-vell'd copse,
 To have woone's nammet down below
 A tree where primrwosen do grow.
 But there's noo time, the whole dăy long,
 Lik' evenèn wi' the Blackbird's zong.

Vor all] Although. Mid] May. drêve] drive. frith]
 brushwood. lops] boughs. plêsh'd] plashed, repaired.
 nammet] midday or afternoon meal.

THE MOTHER'S DREAM

I'd a dream to-night
 As I fell asleep,
 O! the touching sight
 Makes me still to weep:

Of my little lad,
Gone to leave me sad,
Ay, the child I had,
But was not to keep.

As in heaven high,
I my child did seek,
There in train came by
Children fair and meek,
Each in lily white,
With a lamp alight;
Each was clear to sight,
But they did not speak.

Then, a little sad,
Came my child in turn,
But the lamp he had,
O it did not burn!
He, to clear my doubt,
Said, half turned about,
'Your tears put it out;
Mother, never mourn.'

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED

1802-1839

THE VICAR

SOME years ago, ere time and taste
Had turned our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
Was always shown across the green,
And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath ;
Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path,
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle ;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
Upon the parlour steps collected,
Wagged all their tails, and seemed to say—
‘Our master knows you—you’re expected.’

Uprose the Reverend Dr. Brown,
Uprose the Doctor’s winsome marrow ;
The lady laid her knitting down,
Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow ;
Whate’er the stranger’s caste or creed,
Pundit or Papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey’s end,
And warmed himself in Court or College,
He had not gained an honest friend
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge,—
If he departed as he came,
With no new light on love or liquor,—
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
And not the Vicarage, nor the Vicar.

His talk was like a stream, which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses :
It slipped from politics to puns,
It passed from Mahomet to Moses ;
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For dressing eels, or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound Divine,
Of loud Dissent the mortal terror;
And when, by dint of page and line,
He 'stablished Truth, or startled Error,
The Baptist found him far too deep;
The Deist sighed with saving sorrow;
And the lean Levite went to sleep,
And dreamed of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or showed
That Earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
From Jerome, or from Athanasius:
And sure a righteous zeal inspired
The head and hand that penned and planned
them,
For all who understood admired,
And some who did not understand them.

He wrote, too, in a quiet way,
Small treatises, and smaller verses
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
And hints to noble Lords—and nurses;
True histories of last year's ghost,
Lines to a ringlet or a turban,
And trifles for the Morning Post,
And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
Although he had a knack for joking;
He did not make himself a bear,
Although he had a taste for smoking;
And when religious sects ran mad,
He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad,
It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind, and loved to sit
In the low hut or garnished cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
And share the widow's homelier pottage:
At his approach complaint grew mild;
And when his hand unbarred the shutter,
The clammy lips of fever smiled
The welcome which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
Of Julius Caesar, or of Venus;
From him I learnt the rule of three,
Cat's cradle, leap-frog, and *Quae genus*:
I used to singe his powdered wig,
To steal the staff he put such trust in,
And make the puppy dance a jig,
When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack the change! in vain I look
For haunts in which my boyhood trifled,—
The level lawn, the trickling brook,
The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled:
The church is larger than before;
You reach it by a carriage entry;
It holds three hundred people more,
And pews are fitted up for gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat: you'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
Whose phrase is very Ciceronian.
Where is the old man laid?—look down,
And construe on the slab before you—
'*Hic jacet GVLIELMVS BROWN,*
Vir nullâ non donandus lauru.'

FAIRY SONG

He has conned the lesson now;
He has read the book of pain:
There are furrows on his brow;
I must make it smooth again.

Lo! I knock the spurs away;
Lo! I loosen belt and brand;
Hark! I hear the courser neigh
For his stall in Fairy-land.

Bring the cap, and bring the vest;
Buckle on his sandal shoon;
Fetch his memory from the chest
In the treasury of the moon.

I have taught him to be wise
For a little maiden's sake;—
Lo! he opens his glad eyes,
Softly, slowly: Minstrel, wake!

SCHOOL AND SCHOOLFELLOWS

Floreat Etona

TWELVE years ago I made a mock
Of filthy trades and traffics:
I wondered what they meant by stock;
I wrote delightful sapphics;
I knew the streets of Rome and Troy,
I supped with Fates and Furies,—
Twelve years ago I was a boy,
A happy boy, at Drury's.

Twelve years ago!—how many a thought
Of faded pains and pleasures
Those whispered syllables have brought
From Memory's hoarded treasures!

The fields, the farms, the bats, the books,
The glories and disgraces,
The voices of dear friends, the looks
Of old familiar faces!

Kind Mater smiles again to me,
As bright as when we parted;
I seem again the frank, the free,
Stout-limbed, and simple-hearted!
Pursuing every idle dream,
And shunning every warning;
With no hard work but Bovney stream,
No chill except Long Morning:

Now stopping Harry Vernon's ball
That rattled like a rocket;
Now hearing Wentworth's 'Fourteen all!'
And striking for the pocket;
Now feasting on a cheese and flitch,—
Now drinking from the pewter;
Now leaping over Chalvey ditch,
Now laughing at my tutor.

Where are my friends? I am alone;
No playmate shares my beaker:
Some lie beneath the churchyard stone,
And some—before the Speaker;
And some compose a tragedy,
And some compose a rondo;
And some draw sword for Liberty,
And some draw pleas for John Doe.

Tom Mill was used to blacken eyes
Without the fear of sessions;
Charles Medlar loathed false quantities,
As much as false professions;

Now Mill keeps order in the land,
A magistrate pedantic;
And Medlar's feet repose unscanned
Beneath the wide Atlantic.

Wild Nick, whose oaths made such a din,
Does Dr. Martext's duty;
And Mullion, with that monstrous chin,
Is married to a Beauty;
And Darrell studies, week by week,
His Mant, and not his Manton;
And Ball, who was but poor at Greek,
Is very rich at Canton.

And I am eight-and-twenty now;—
The world's cold chains have bound me;
And darker shades are on my brow,
And sadder scenes around me:
In Parliament I fill my seat,
With many other noodles;
And lay my head in Jermyn Street,
And sip my hock at Boodle's.

But often, when the cares of life
Have set my temples aching,
When visions haunt me of a wife,
When duns await my waking,
When Lady Jane is in a pet,
Or Hoby in a hurry,
When Captain Hazard wins a bet,
Or Beaulieu spoils a curry,—

For hours and hours I think and talk
Of each remembered hobby;
I long to lounge in Poets' Walk,
To shiver in the lobby;

I wish that I could run away
From House, and Court, and Levee,
Where bearded men appear to-day
Just Eton boys grown heavy,—

That I could bask in childhood's sun
And dance o'er childhood's roses,
And find huge wealth in one pound one,
Vast wit in broken noses,
And play Sir Giles at Datchet Lane,
And call the milk-maids Houris,—
That I could be a boy again,—
A happy boy,—at Drury's.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN

1803–1849

THE NAMELESS ONE

ROLL forth, my song, like the rushing river,
That sweeps along to the mighty sea;
God will inspire me while I deliver
My soul of thee!

Tell thou the world, when my bones lie whitening
Amid the last homes of youth and eld,
That once there was one whose veins ran lightning
No eye beheld.

Tell how his boyhood was one drear night-hour,
How shone for him, through his griefs and gloom,
No star of all heaven sends to light our
Path to the tomb.

eld] age.

Roll on, my song, and to after ages

Tell how, disdaining all earth can give,
He would have taught men, from wisdom's pages,
The way to live.

And tell how trampled, derided, hated,

And worn by weakness, disease, and wrong,
He fled for shelter to God, who mated
His soul with song—

With song which alway, sublime or vapid,

Flowed like a rill in the morning-beam,
Perchance not deep, but intense and rapid—
A mountain stream.

Tell how this Nameless, condemned for years long

To herd with demons from hell beneath,
Saw things that made him, with groans and tears,
long
For even death.

Go on to tell how, with genius wasted,

Betrayed in friendship, befooled in love,
With spirit shipwrecked, and young hopes blasted,
He still, still strove;

Till spent with toil, dreeing death for others,

And some whose hands should have wrought for
him

(If children live not for sires and mothers),
His mind grew dim;

And he fell far through that pit abysmal,

The gulf and grave of Maginn and Burns,
And pawned his soul for the devil's dismal
Stock of returns;

dreeing] enduring.

But yet redeemed it in days of darkness,
And shapes and signs of the final wrath,
When death, in hideous and ghastly starkness,
Stood on his path.

And tell how now, amid wreck and sorrow,
And want, and sickness, and houseless nights
He bides in calmness the silent morrow,
That no ray lights.

And lives he still, then? Yes! Old and hoary
At thirty-nine, from despair and woe,
He lives, enduring what future story
Will never know.

Him grant a grave to, ye pitying noble,
Deep in your bosoms: there let him dwell!
He, too, had tears for all souls in trouble
Here, and in hell.

DARK ROSALEEN

O my Dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep.
There's wine from the royal Pope,
Upon the ocean green;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Over hills, and thro' dales,
Have I roamed for your sake;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
O, there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened thro' my blood.
My Dark Rosaleen!

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro, do I move.
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!
The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my Queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen;
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My Dark Rosaleen!

My own Rosaleen!
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly, for your weal:
Your holy delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home, in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My fond Rosaleen!
You'll think of me through daylight hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen!

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
O, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills!
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My fond Rosaleen!
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My Dark Rosaleen!

O, the Erne shall run red,
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,

And gun-peal and slogan-cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
The Judgement Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen!

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES

1803-1849

FROM 'DEATH'S JEST BOOK'

(1) SAILORS' SONG

To sea, to sea! The calm is o'er;
The wanton water leaps in sport,
And rattles down the pebbly shore;
The dolphin wheels, the sea-cows snort,
And unseen mermaid's pearly song
Comes bubbling up, the weeds among.
Fling broad the sail, dip deep the oar:
To sea, to sea! the calm is o'er.

To sea, to sea! our wide-winged bark
Shall billowy cleave its sunny way,
And with its shadow, fleet and dark,
Break the caved Tritons' azure day,
Like mighty eagle soaring light
O'er antelopes on Alpine height.
The anchor heaves, the ship swings free,
The sails swell full. To sea, to sea!

(2) WOLFRAM'S DIRGE

IF thou wilt ease thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then sleep, dear, sleep;
And not a sorrow
Hang any tear on your eyelashes;
Lie still and deep,
Sad soul, until the sea-wave washes
The rim o' the sun to-morrow,
In eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then die, dear, die;
'Tis deeper, sweeter,
Than on a rose-bank to lie dreaming
With folded eye;
And there alone, amid the beaming
Of Love's stars, thou'lt meet her
In eastern sky.

DREAM-PEDLARY

IF there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell;
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's fresh crown
Only a rose-leaf down.
If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang the bell,
What would you buy?

A cottage lone and still,
 With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
 Until I die.
Such pearl from Life's fresh crown
Fain would I shake me down.
Were dreams to have at will,
This would best heal my ill,
 This would I buy.

But there were dreams to sell,
 Ill didst thou buy;
Life is a dream, they tell,
 Waking, to die.
Dreaming a dream to prize,
Is wishing ghosts to rise;
 And, if I had the spell
 To call the buried well,
Which one would I?

If there are ghosts to raise,
 What shall I call,
Out of hell's murky haze,
 Heaven's blue pall?
Raise my loved long-lost boy
To lead me to his joy.
 There are no ghosts to raise;
 Out of death lead no ways;
 Vain is the call.

Know'st thou not ghosts to sue?
 No love thou hast.
Else lie, as I will do,
 And breathe thy last.

So out of Life's fresh crown
Fall like a rose-leaf down.

Thus are the ghosts to woo;
Thus are all dreams made true,
Ever to last!

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

1803-1875

AND SHALL TRELAWNY DIE?

A GOOD sword and a trusty hand!

A merry heart and true!

King James's men shall understand

What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fixed the where and when?

And shall Trelawny die?

Here's twenty thousand Cornish men

Will know the reason why!

Out spake their captain brave and bold,

A merry wight was he:

'If London Tower were Michael's hold,

We'll set Trelawny free!

'We'll cross the Tamar, land to land,

The Severn is no stay,—

With "one and all," and hand in hand,

And who shall bid us nay?

'And when we come to London Wall,

A pleasant sight to view,

Come forth! Come forth, ye cowards all,

Here's men as good as you.

'Trelawny he's in keep and hold,
Trelawny he may die;—
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold
Will know the reason why!'

ARE THEY NOT ALL MINISTERING SPIRITS?

WE see them not—we cannot hear
The music of their wing—
Yet know we that they sojourn near,
The Angels of the spring!
They glide along this lovely ground
When the first violet grows;
Their graceful hands have just unbound
The zone of yonder rose.
I gather it for thy dear breast,
From stain and shadow free:
That which an Angel's touch hath blest
Is meet, my love, for thee!

AISHAH SHECHINAH

A SHAPE, like folded light, embodied air,
Yet wreathed with flesh, and warm:
All that of heaven is feminine and fair,
Moulded in visible form.
She stood, the Lady Shechinah of earth,
A chancel for the sky:
Where woke, to breath and beauty, God's own
Birth,
For men to see Him by.
Round her, too pure to mingle with the day
Light, that was life, abode;
Folded within her fibres meekly lay
The link of boundless God.

So linked, so blent, that when, with pulse fulfilled,
Moved but that Infant Hand,
Far, far away, His conscious Godhead thrilled,
And stars might understand.

Lo! where they pause, with intergathering rest,
The Threefold, and the One;
And lo, He binds them to her orient breast,
His Manhood girded on.

The Zone, where two glad worlds for ever meet,
Beneath that bosom ran:
Deep in that womb the conquering Paraclete
Smote Godhead on to man.

Sole scene among the stars, where, yearning, glide
The Threefold and The One;
Her God upon her lap, the Virgin-Bride,
Her awful Child, her Son!

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803-1882

THE PROBLEM

I LIKE a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowlèd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;

Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe;
The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone;
And Morning opes with haste her lids,
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For, out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose to upper air;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass ;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned ;
And the same power that reared the shrine,
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken ;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise,—
The Book itself before me lies,
Old *Chrysostom*, best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear ;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

BRAHMA

IF the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

GIVE ALL TO LOVE

GIVE all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path,
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout,
Souls above doubt,
Valour unbending:
Such 'twill reward;—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavour—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, for ever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise,
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay;
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go
The gods arrive.

THE MONUMENT OF CONCORD FIGHT

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

TO EVA

O FAIR and stately maid, whose eyes
Were kindled in the upper skies
At the same torch that lighted mine;
For so I must interpret still
Thy sweet dominion o'er my will,
A sympathy divine.

Ah! let me blameless gaze upon
Features that seem at heart my own;
Nor fear those watchful sentinels,
Who charm the more their glance forbids
Chaste-glowing, underneath their lids,
With fire that draws while it repels.

THE HUMBLE-BEE

BURLY, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And, with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a colour of romance,
And, infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavoury or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap, and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

FRANCIS SYLVESTER MAHONY

1804-1866

THE SHANDON BELLS

WITH deep affection,
And recollection,
I often think of
 Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling around my cradle
 Their magic spells.
On this I ponder
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,
 Sweet Cork, of thee;
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
 Cathedral shrine,
While at a glib rate
Brass tongues would vibrate—
But all their music
 Spoke naught like thine;
For memory, dwelling
On each proud swelling
Of the belfry knelling
 Its bold notes free,

Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee.

I've heard bells tolling
Old Adrian's Mole in,
Their thunder rolling
From the Vatican,
And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
Of Notre Dame;
But thy sounds were sweeter
Than the dome of Peter
Fling o'er the Tiber,
Pealing solemnly—
O, the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow,
While on tower and kiosk O!
In Saint Sophia
The Turkman gets,
And loud in air
Calls men to prayer
From the tapering summits
Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant them;
But there's an anthem
More dear to me,—

'Tis the bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

1806-1861

THE SWEETNESS OF ENGLAND

WHOEVER lives true life, will love true love.
I learnt to love that England. Very oft,
Before the day was born, or otherwise
Through secret windings of the afternoons,
I threw my hunters off and plunged myself
Among the deep hills, as a hunted stag
Will take the waters, shivering with the fear
And passion of the course. And when at last
Escaped, so many a green slope built on slope
Betwixt me and the enemy's house behind,
I dared to rest, or wander, in a rest
Made sweeter for the step upon the grass,
And view the ground's most gentle dimplement
(As if God's finger touched but did not press
In making England), such an up and down
Of verdure,—nothing too much up or down,
A ripple of land; such little hills, the sky
Can stoop to tenderly and the wheat-fields climb;
Such nooks of valleys lined with orchises,
Fed full of noises by invisible streams;
And open pastures where you scarcely tell
White daisies from white dew,—at intervals
The mythic oaks and elm-trees standing out
Self-poised upon their prodigy of shade,—

I thought my father's land was worthy too
Of being my Shakespeare's.

* * * * *

But then the thrushes sang,
And shook my pulses and the elms' new leaves;
At which I turned, and held my finger up,
And bade him mark that, howsoe'er the world
Went ill, as he related, certainly
The thrushes still sang in it. At the word
His brow would soften,—and he bore with me
In melancholy patience, not unkind,
While breaking into voluble ecstasy
I flattered all the beauteous country round,
As poets use, the skies, the clouds, the fields,
The happy violets hiding from the roads
The primroses run down to, carrying gold;
The tangled hedgerows, where the cows push out
Impatient horns and tolerant churning mouths
'Twixt dripping ash-boughs,—hedgerows all alive
With birds and gnats and large white butterflies
Which look as if the May-flower had caught life
And palpitated forth upon the wind;
Hills, vales, woods, netted in a silver mist,
Farms, granges, doubled up among the hills;
And cattle grazing in the watered vales,
And cottage-chimneys smoking from the woods,
And cottage-gardens smelling everywhere,
Confused with smell of orchards.

Aurora Leigh, Book I.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Φεῦ, φεῦ· τί προσδέρκεσθ' ἔμ' ὄμμασιν, τέκνα;

Medea.

I

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
 Ere the sorrow comes with years?
 They are leaning their young heads against their
 mothers,
 And *that* cannot stop their tears.
 The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
 The young birds are chirping in the nest,
 The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
 The young flowers are blowing toward the west—
 But the young, young children, O my brothers,
 They are weeping bitterly!
 They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
 In the country of the free.

II

Do you question the young children in the sorrow,
 Why their tears are falling so?
 The old man may weep for his to-morrow
 Which is lost in Long Ago;
 The old tree is leafless in the forest,
 The old year is ending in the frost,
 The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
 The old hope is hardest to be lost.
 But the young, young children, O my brothers,
 Do you ask them why they stand
 Weeping sore before the bosoms of their mothers,
 In our happy Fatherland?

III

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
 And their looks are sad to see,

For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy.

'Your old earth,' they say, 'is very dreary;
Our young feet,' they say, 'are very weak!

Few paces have we taken, yet are weary—

Our grave-rest is very far to seek.

Ask the aged why they weep, and not the children;

For the outside earth is cold;

And we young ones stand without, in our bewil-
dering,

And the graves are for the old.'

IV

'True,' say the children, 'it may happen

That we die before our time;

Little Alice died last year—her grave is shapen

Like a snowball, in the rime.

We looked into the pit prepared to take her:

Was no room for any work in the close clay!

From the sleep wherein she lieth none will wake her,

Crying, "Get up, little Alice! it is day."

If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,

With your ear down, little Alice never cries;

Could we see her face, be sure we should not know her,

For the smile has time for growing in her eyes:

And merry go her moments, lulled and stilled in

The shroud by the kirk-chime!

It is good when it happens,' say the children,

'That we die before our time.'

V

Alas, alas, the children! they are seeking

Death in life, as best to have;

They are binding up their hearts away from breaking,

With a cerement from the grave.

Go out, children, from the mine and from the city,
Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do;
Pluck you handfuls of the meadow cowslips pretty,
Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let them through!
But they answer, 'Are your cowslips of the meadows
Like our weeds anear the mine?
Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-shadows,
From your pleasures fair and fine!

VI

'For oh,' say the children, 'we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap;
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;
And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,
The reddest flower would look as pale as snow;
For, all day, we drag our burden tiring
Through the coal-dark, underground—
Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round.

VII

'For, all day, the wheels are droning, turning,—
Their wind comes in our faces,—
Till our hearts turn,—our head, with pulses burning,
And the walls turn in their places:
Turns the sky in the high window blank and reeling,
Turns the long light that drops adown the wall,
Turn the black flies that crawl along the ceiling,
All are turning, all the day, and we with all.
And all day, the iron wheels are droning,
And sometimes we could pray,
"O ye wheels" (breaking out in a mad moaning),
"Stop! be silent for to-day!"'

VIII

Ay! be silent! Let them hear each other breathing
For a moment, mouth to mouth!
Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh
wreathing
Of their tender human youth!
Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:
Let them prove their living souls against the notion
That they live in you, or under you, O wheels!—
Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sun-
ward,
Spin on blindly in the dark.

IX

Now tell the poor young children, O my brothers,
To look up to Him and pray;
So the blessèd One who blesseth all the others,
Will bless them another day.
They answer, 'Who is God that He should hear us,
While the rushing of the iron wheels is stirred?
When we sob aloud, the human creatures near us
Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a word.
And *we* hear not (for the wheels in their resounding)
Strangers speaking at the door.
Is it likely God, with angels singing round Him,
Hears our weeping any more?

X

'Two words, indeed, of praying we remember,
And at midnight's hour of harm,
"Our Father," looking upward in the chamber,
We say softly for a charm.

We know no other words, except "Our Father,"
 And we think that, in some pause of angels' song,
 God may pluck them with the silence sweet to
 gather,
 And hold both within His right hand which is
 strong.
 "Our Father!" If He heard us, He would surely
 (For they call Him good and mild)
 Answer, smiling down the steep world very purely,
 "Come and rest with Me, My child."

XI

'But, no!' say the children, weeping faster,
 'He is speechless as a stone;
 And they tell us, of His image is the master
 Who commands us to work on.
 Go to!' say the children,—'up in Heaven,
 Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all we find.
 Do not mock us; grief has made us unbelieving—
 We look up for God, but tears have made us blind.'
 Do you hear the children weeping and disproving,
 O my brothers, what ye preach?
 For God's possible is taught by His world's loving,
 And the children doubt of each.

XII

And well may the children weep before you!
 They are weary ere they run;
 They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
 Which is brighter than the sun.
 They know the grief of man, without its wisdom;
 They sink in man's despair, without its calm;
 Are slaves, without the liberty in Christdom,
 Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm,—

Are worn, as if with age, yet unretrievingly
The harvest of its memories cannot reap,—
Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.
Let them weep! let them weep!

XIII

They look up, with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For they mind you of their angels in high places,
With eyes turned on Deity!—
'How long,' they say, 'how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's
heart,—
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?
Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
And your purple shows your path!
But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath.'

A DEAD ROSE

I

O ROSE, who dares to name thee?
No longer roseate now, nor soft, nor sweet,
But pale, and hard, and dry, as stubble-wheat,—
Kept seven years in a drawer—thy titles shame
thee.

II

The breeze that used to blow thee
Between the hedgerow thorns, and take away
An odour up the lane to last all day,—
If breathing now,—unsweetened would forgo
thee.

III

The sun that used to smite thee,
And mix his glory in thy gorgeous urn
Till beam appeared to bloom, and flower to burn,—
If shining now,—with not a hue would light thee.

IV

The dew that used to wet thee,
And, white first, grow incarnadined, because
It lay upon thee where the crimson was,—
If dropping now,—would darken, where it met
thee.

V

The fly that 'lit upon thee,
To stretch the tendrils of its tiny feet
Along thy leaf's pure edges after heat,—
If 'lighting now,—would coldly overrun thee.

VI

The bee that once did suck thee,
And build thy perfumed ambers up his hive,
And swoon in thee for joy, till scarce alive,—
If passing now,—would blindly overlook thee.

VII

The heart doth recognize thee,
Alone, alone! the heart doth smell thee sweet,
Doth view thee fair, doth judge thee most complete,
Perceiving all those changes that disguise thee.

VIII

Yes, and the heart doth owe thee
More love, dead rose, than to any roses bold
Which Julia wears at dances, smiling cold!—
Lie still upon this heart—which breaks below thee!

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

I

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

II

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

III

High on the shore sate the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

IV

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
(How tall it stood in the river!),
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sate by the river.

V

'This is the way,' laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sate by the river),
'The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed.'
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

VI

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

VII

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

. COWPER'S GRAVE

I

It is a place where poets crowned may feel the
heart's decaying;
It is a place where happy saints may weep amid
their praying.
Yet let the grief and humbleness, as low as silence,
languish:
Earth surely now may give her calm to whom she
gave her anguish.

II

O poets, from a maniac's tongue was poured the
deathless singing!
O Christians, at your cross of hope, a hopeless hand
was clinging!
O men, this man in brotherhood your weary paths
beguiling,
Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died
while ye were smiling!

III

And now, what time ye all may read through
dimming tears his story,
How discord on the music fell, and darkness on the
glory,
And how when, one by one, sweet sounds and
wandering lights departed,
He wore no less a loving face because so broken-
hearted,

IV

He shall be strong to sanctify the poet's high
vocation,
And bow the meekest Christian down in meeker
adoration;
Nor ever shall he be, in praise, by wise or good
forsaken,
Named softly as the household name of one whom
God hath taken.

V

With quiet sadness and no gloom I learn to think
upon him,—
With meekness that is gratefulness to God whose
heaven hath won him,

Who suffered once the madness-cloud to His own
love to blind him,
But gently led the blind along where breath and
bird could find him;

VI

And wrought within his shattered brain such quick
poetic senses
As hills have language for, and stars, harmonious
influences.
The pulse of dew upon the grass, kept his within its
number,
And silent shadows from the trees refreshed him
like a slumber.

VII

Wild timid hares were drawn from woods to share
his home-caresses,
Uplooking to his human eyes with sylvan tender-
nesses.
The very world, by God's constraint, from false-
hood's ways removing,
Its women and its men became, beside him, true
and loving.

VIII

And though, in blindness, he remained unconscious
of that guiding,
And things provided came without the sweet sense
of providing,
He testified this solemn truth, while frenzy deso-
lated,
—Nor man nor nature satisfies whom only God
created.

IX

Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother while
she blesses
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of
her kisses,—
That turns his fevered eyes around—‘My mother!
where’s my mother?’—
As if such tender words and deeds could come from
any other!—

X

The fever gone, with leaps of heart he sees her
bending o’er him,
Her face all pale from watchful love, the unwearied
love she bore him!—
Thus, woke the poet from the dream his life’s long
fever gave him,
Beneath those deep pathetic Eyes, which closed
in death to save him.

XI

Thus? oh, not *thus!* no type of earth can image
that awaking,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant of seraphs,
round him breaking,
Or felt the new immortal throb of soul from body
parted,
But felt those eyes alone, and knew,—‘*My Saviour!*
not deserted!’

XII

Deserted! Who hath dreamt that when the cross
in darkness rested,
Upon the Victim’s hidden face, no love was mani-
fested?

What frantic hands outstretched have e'er the
atoning drops averted?

What tears have washed them from the soul, that
one should be deserted?

XIII

Deserted! God could separate from His own essence
rather;

And Adam's sins *have* swept between the righteous
Son and Father.

Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry His universe
hath shaken—

It went up single, echoless, 'My God, I am forsaken!'

XIV

It went up from the Holy's lips amid His lost
creation,

That, of the lost, no son should use those words of
desolation!

That earth's worst frenzies, marring hope, should
mar not hope's fruition,

And I, on Cowper's grave, should see his rapture
in a vision.

THE SLEEP

He giveth His belovèd sleep.—Ps. cxxvii. 2.

OF all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward into souls afar,

Along the Psalmist's music deep,

Now tell me if that any is,

For gift or grace, surpassing this—

'He giveth His belovèd, sleep'?

What would we give to our beloved?

The hero's heart, to be unmoved,

The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep,
The patriot's voice, to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown, to light the brows?—
He giveth His belovèd, sleep.

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved
A little dust to overweep,
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake.
He giveth His belovèd, sleep.

'Sleep soft, beloved!' we sometimes say,
Who have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep.
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber when
He giveth His belovèd, sleep.

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delvèd gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And giveth His belovèd, sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill;
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap.
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
He giveth His belovèd, sleep.

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man

Confirmed in such a rest to keep;
But angels say, and through the *word*
I think their happy smile is *heard*,
'He giveth His belovèd, sleep.'

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on his love repose,
Who giveth His belovèd, sleep.

And, friends, dear friends,—when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let One, most loving of you all,
Say, 'Not a tear must o'er her fall,'
He giveth His belovèd, sleep.'

THE DESERTED GARDEN

I MIND me in the days departed,
How often underneath the sun
With childish bounds I used to run
To a garden long deserted.

The beds and walks were vanished quite;
And wheresoe'er had struck the spade,
The greenest grasses Nature laid,
To sanctify her right.

I called the place my wilderness,
For no one entered there but I.
The sheep looked in, the grass to espy,
And passed it ne'ertheless.

The trees were interwoven wild,
And spread their boughs enough about
To keep both sheep and shepherd out,
But not a happy child.

Adventurous joy it was for me!
I crept beneath the boughs, and found
A circle smooth of mossy ground
Beneath a poplar-tree.

Old garden rose-trees hedged it in,
Bedropt with roses waxen-white,
Well satisfied with dew and light,
And careless to be seen.

Long years ago, it might befall,
When all the garden flowers were trim,
The grave old gardener prided him
On these the most of all.

Some Lady, stately overmuch,
Here moving with a silken noise,
Has blushed beside them at the voice
That likened her to such.

Or these, to make a diadem,
She often may have plucked and twined;
Half-smiling as it came to mind,
That few would look at *them*.

O, little thought that Lady proud,
A child would watch her fair white rose,
When buried lay her whiter brows,
And silk was changed for shroud!—

Nor thought that gardener (full of scorns
For men unlearned and simple phrase)
A child would bring it all its praise,
By creeping through the thorns!

To me upon my low moss seat,
Though never a dream the roses sent
Of science or love's compliment,
I ween they smelt as sweet.

It did not move my grief to see
The trace of human step departed:
Because the garden was deserted,
The blither place for me!

Friends, blame me not! a narrow ken
Hath childhood 'twixt the sun and sward:
We draw the moral afterward—
We feel the gladness then.

And gladdest hours for me did glide
In silence at the rose-tree wall:
A thrush made gladness musical
Upon the other side.

Nor he nor I did e'er incline
To peck or pluck the blossoms white:—
How should I know but that they might
Lead lives as glad as mine?

To make my hermit-home complete,
I brought clear water from the spring
Praised in its own low murmuring,
And cresses glossy wet.

And so, I thought, my likeness grew
(Without the melancholy tale)
To 'gentle hermit of the dale,'
And Angelina too.

For oft I read within my nook
Such minstrel stories; till the breeze
Made sounds poetic in the trees,
And then I shut the book.

If I shut this wherein I write,
I hear no more the wind athwart
Those trees, nor feel that childish heart
Delighting in delight.

My childhood from my life is parted,
My footstep from the moss which drew
Its fairy circle round: anew
The garden is deserted.

Another thrush may there rehearse
The madrigals which sweetest are;
No more for me!—myself afar
Do sing a sadder verse.

Ah me! ah me! when erst I lay
In that child's-nest so greenly wrought,
I laughed unto myself and thought,
'The time will pass away.'

And still I laughed, and did not fear
But that, whene'er was passed away
The childish time, some happier play
My womanhood would cheer.

I knew the time would pass away;
And yet, beside the rose-tree wall,
Dear God, how seldom, if at all,
Did I look up to pray!

The time is past: and now that grows
The cypress high among the trees,
And I behold white sepulchres
As well as the white rose,—

When wiser, meeker thoughts are given,
And I have learnt to lift my face,
Reminded how earth's greenest place
The colour draws from heaven,—

It something saith for earthly pain,
But more for heavenly promise free,
That I who was, would shrink to be
That happy child again.

SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE

I

I THOUGHT once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair,
And a voice said in mastery while I strove, . . .
'Guess now who holds thee?'—'Death,' I said.
But, there,
The silver answer rang, . . . 'Not Death, but Love.'

III

UNLIKE are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to play thy part
Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, . . . singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head,—on mine, the dew,—
And Death must dig the level where these agree.

IV

THOU hast thy calling to some palace-floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems! where
The dancers will break footing, from the care
Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more.
And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
For hand of thine? and canst thou think and bear
To let thy music drop here unaware
In folds of golden fullness at my door?
Look up and see the casement broken in,
The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
Hush, call no echo up in further proof
Of desolation! there's a voice within
That weeps . . . as thou must sing . . . alone, aloof.

VI

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore, . . .
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

VIII

What can I give thee back, O liberal
And princely giver, who hast brought the gold
And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
And laid them on the outside of the wall
For such as I to take or leave withal,
In unexpected largesse? am I cold,
Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
High gifts, I render nothing back at all?
Not so; not cold,—but very poor instead.
Ask God who knows. For frequent tears have run
The colours from my life, and left so dead
And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
To give the same as pillow to thy head.
Go farther! let it serve to trample on.

X

YET, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
And worthy of acceptation. Fire is bright,
Let temple burn, or flax. An equal light
Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or weed.
And love is fire; and when I say at need
I love thee . . . mark! . . . I love thee! . . . in thy sight
I stand transfigured, glorified aright,
With conscience of the new rays that proceed
Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures
Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
And what I *feel*, across the inferior features
Of what I *am*, doth flash itself, and show
How that great work of Love enhances Nature's.

XIV

IF thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
'I love her for her smile . . . her look . . . her way
Of speaking gently, . . . for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day'—
For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so
wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,—
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayst love on, through love's eternity.

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